THE TIMES

No. 66,494 THURSDAY APRIL 22 1999 http://www.the-times.co.uk



Nicholas Cage and a life of depravity
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Jacqueline Bisset: Never too old to be a star page 39



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26 pages of appointments PLUS save £££'s on books – Voucher page 42 BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS TOKEN, PAGE 28

Hitler's birthday gift: a high school massacre

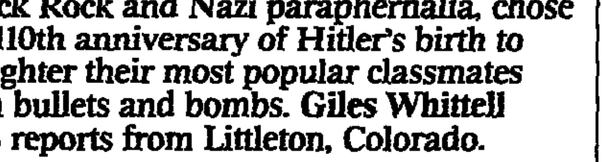






Eric Harris

Dylan Klebold



An anguished America grappled yesterday with the worst schoolyard massacre in its history, which left 15 dead and 16 injured. Two high school outcasts, members of the Trenchcoat Mafia gang, obsessed with Shock Rock and Nazi paraphernalia, chose the 110th anniversary of Hitler's birth to slaughter their most popular classmates with bullets and bombs. Giles Whittell (left) reports from Littleton, Colorado.

MOMENTS before mayhem descended on Columbine High School, Brooks Brown bumped into a friend on a suicide mission. "I said, 'Hey, man'," Mr Brown remembered, "and he said, 'Brooks, I like you. Get out of here. Go home'."

Mr Brown was one of the lucky ones. Eric Harris, the 18-year-old he knew as "just an odd, nice guy", had announced his own death on the Internet and transformed himself into a walking arsenal.

He was about to unleash four hours of terror on a proud and flourishing school, the latest victim of an epidemic of teenage gun violence that has left America in shock.

It was soon after 11am on Tuesday. Bristling with guns and with explosives strapped to their bodies, Harris and his accomplice, Dylan Klebold, also 18, launched their attack on the school that called them "outcasts", with a bomb.

It detonated on a broad boulevard that forms the west side of Columbine's large, landscaped grounds. From there the two teenagers in their trademark black trenchcoats strode across a car park used by senior pupils, and started shooting.

Frank Wade, 18, saw one of their early victims — a girl shot in the leg near the top of a short flight of steps. As she lay wounded, a young man came to her rescue and paid dearly for it. "The trench coat walked up and shot the boy point blank in the back," Mr Wade said later, when Columbine had become a war zone of stretchers, SWAT teams and panic-stricken parents.

At 11.30 about 400 pupils were eating an early lunch in the school's ground-floor cafeteria. Most would soon flee for their lives, but initially they thought the popping sounds and smoke from outside were a prank.

Seconds later, Harris and Klebold entered, firing sometimes at random and sometimes with grim selection criteria: Repeatedly, they warned that "jocks" — the school's popular athletes — were their intended victims.

From the start there was evidence of detailed planning. At least three more home-made bombs exploded within minutes of each other in the car park, the cafeteria and an adjoining snack room.

As fellow pupils and at least one teacher staggered from gunshot wounds and bullets ricocheted off steel lockers, survivors ran for cover wherever it could be found. Some spent the next three hours barricaded inside classrooms; others in a tiny janitor's storeroom. Television cameras zoomed in on a desperate note scrawled onto paper and pressed to an upstairs window: "Help. I'm bleeding to death."

From the cafeteria the gunmen walked calmly upstairs to the library that police would later call the "kill zone" — 45 pupils had scrambled under desks, but they found no shelter.

"There was a girl crouched under a desk, and one of the gunmen came over and said, 'Peekaboo' and shot her in the neck," said Byron Kirkland, 15, who escaped uninjured. Bree Pasquale was in the library too. Her horrifying account was later broadcast repeatedly — the most powerful commentary in the media storm that has since engulfed Littleton. "Everyone around me got shot, and I begged him for ten minutes not to shoot me," Ms Bree, 16, sobbed to a television reporter, who was also crying.

Two pupils next to her were shot at point black range. "He shot one student because she had a hat on and a black student because he was black, saying it was all because people were mean to him last year."

Several pupils, after running to safety with their arms aloft, on police orders lest the gunmen try to escape with them, said the killers acted with quiet glee, giggling even as they carried out their executions. One student who listened from behind a locked door said: "We heard someone scream. 'Please don't kill me, please don't kill me'. Then we heard a voice say 'That's too bad,' and then we heard a shot."

After hours of confusion, Jefferson County Sheriff John Stone said 12 bodies had been counted in the library, one immediately outside it and two elsewhere on the school grounds.

At least 19 pupils were taken to area hospitals by ambulance or helicopter . Several remained in critical condition yesterday, including an unnamed 17-year-old boy with five gunshot wounds to the chest. A girl with nine shrapnel wounds from a bomb was said to be improving.

Police were at the school within five minutes of the first shots, but were hampered from the start by fear of bombs and booby traps; up to 15 explosions were reported during the afternoon and 30 more devices had been found by bomb squads by yesterday morning, three of them planted in nearby cars and one at Mr Harris's home.

SWAT teams arriving two hours into the ordeal
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School shootings, pages 2-5
Magnus Linklater, page 24
Leading article, page 25

West shifts towards Kosovo land force

BY MICHAEL EVANS AND PHILIP WEBSTER

INCREASING expectations that Nato ground troops could be sent into Kosovo before President Milosevic signs a peace deal were heightened by Tony Blair and the US Government last night.

The Prime Minister flew into Washington for talks with President Clinton, having indicated to the Commons before he left that a land force may be used against a "degraded" Serbian war machine.

The United States said last night that it would back any decision by Nato to revise the existing feasibility study for deploying ground troops in Kosovo if top alliance officials called for such a reassessment. "If the military command and the Nato Secretary-General believe that it's prudent to update the assessment based on the changing circumstances on the ground, we would support that," Joe Lockhart, White House spokesman, said.

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Although Mr Blair said that the most effective way of halting "ethnic cleansing" was to press on with airstrikes, the Prime Minister left open the option for ground forces to go in at some stage when he repeated that Mr Milosevic did not have a veto on Nato action. However, Mr Blair said that any invasion against "undegraded" Serb forces posed formidable difficulties.

George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, also appeared to signal that preparations were being made for an invasion which Nato hoped would be only lightly opposed. "The position on a forced invasion, a wholesale, opposed invasion remains as it was at the beginning, but I use my words this morning with some care," he told a press briefing. "We are determined that an international force will deploy in Kosovo once the airstrikes have done their job, so the people can return to their homes."

Mr Blair and Mr Clinton met to prepare for the Nato summit which begins tomorrow. But before he left Mr Blair also appealed to the Russian people for support for Nato's action against Mr Milosevic. He told Russian television that Nato had no quarrel with the Serbian people, still less with the Russian people. Both Russia and Serbia stood out against fascism during the Second World War.

He said the bombing had nothing to do with a Nato struggle agaisnt Russia. It was a basic humanitarian cause. "What is happening in Kosovo today — people being herded onto trains, driven from their homes at gunpoint, women raped, children without fathers — the last time this happened, it happened in Nazi Germany."

In Paris, President Chirac, speaking last night on the eve of leaving for the Washington summit, called for the Nato airstrikes against Yugoslavia to intensify in order to break Belgrade's defiance. "Massacres, rape, pillaging, torching of villages and an exodus of families who have been separated, that is the action of the Serb authorities and it must stop," he said in a radio and television address to the nation.

Downing Street said that the Washington summit would discuss ground troops, but there was no question of setting a timetable. The spokesman said that the summit would examine whether it was necessary to increase the proposed peace implementation force for Kosovo of 28,000 troops. The present strength of the force waiting in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is about 12,000; it would rise to 42,000 when the extra British armoured battle group arrives.



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SIMON WALKER



The Queen kicking off her shoes before entering the women's quarters of a house in Korea

The Queen puts her best (bare) foot forward

EVEN a monarch is expected to respect local customs. The Queen, celebrating her 73rd birthday yesterday at a rural village in Korea, had to remove her white court shoes before entering a traditional house in her stockinged feet (Alan Hamilton writes).

She had been watching the preparation of pickled cabbage outside a home in the preserved heritage village of Hayhoe, 150 miles south of Seoul, when she was invited to inspect the women's quarters of the still-inhabited 18th century dwelling. In a brief moment of confusion, she had to be reminded that shoes are not worn indoors. Casually, without even bending down, she kicked off her shoes, and her mainly female entourage immediately followed suit. After a brief encounter with the interior of the wooden house, she re-emerged to wriggle her feet back into her shoes and continue her birthday programme.

The Queen's momentary scowl at being wrong-footed was an uncharacteristic moment during a birthday that she appeared to be thoroughly enjoying. The day was crowned with a standing ovation at a concert in Seoul that brought a tear to her eye and warm smile of gratitude.



"I think we should get her a pair of shoes"

INSIDE

Thatcherite protest

Tory Shadow Cabinet members baulked at their leadership's orders to abandon a central tenet of Thatcherism — the search for private sector solutions to the health and education systems Politics, pages 14, 15

Hospital fight over boy's life

Relatives of a disabled boy and doctors were involved in a violent hospital fracas as the family tried to revive him against medical advice, a court was told..... Page 11

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High school killing spree leaves 15 dead

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LITTLETON, COLORADO

AS DAYLIGHT came to Littleton yesterday the estimated death toll from the shooting there fell from 25 to 15, but 16 teenagers were still in hospitals throughout the Denver area, at least five of them in critical condition.

Twelve people died in the Columbine High School library when Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold turned it into a charnel house on Tuesday morning, entering with handguns and shotguns and shooting several fellow-pupils at point-blank range. One body was found outside the library and two more elsewhere on the school grounds.

Apart from Harris and Klebold, the names of the dead were not immediately available. Their families had been informed by Tuesday night, however. One teacher was said to be among the victims.

Lists of the injured read like data from a military offensive. At Swedish Medical Center alone, the nearest hospital to the scene, three pupils were in critical condition including Richard Casaldo, 17, who has five gunshot wounds to the chest, back, arm and abdomen. But the condition of 18-year-old Valerie Schnurr, who was originally reported to have been shot nine times, was downgraded to serious after doctors found that her wounds were from bomb shrapnel.

Yesterday's *Rocky Mountain News* carried a single word for its front-page headline — Heartache — and nowhere was the anguish more acute than at Leawood Elementary School, a few blocks from Columbine, where parents waited for news of their children. Some sobbed quietly. Others gathered in a hastily-designated "prayer corner". One mother refused to leave the high school campus and ran through a police line in her socks to look for her son.

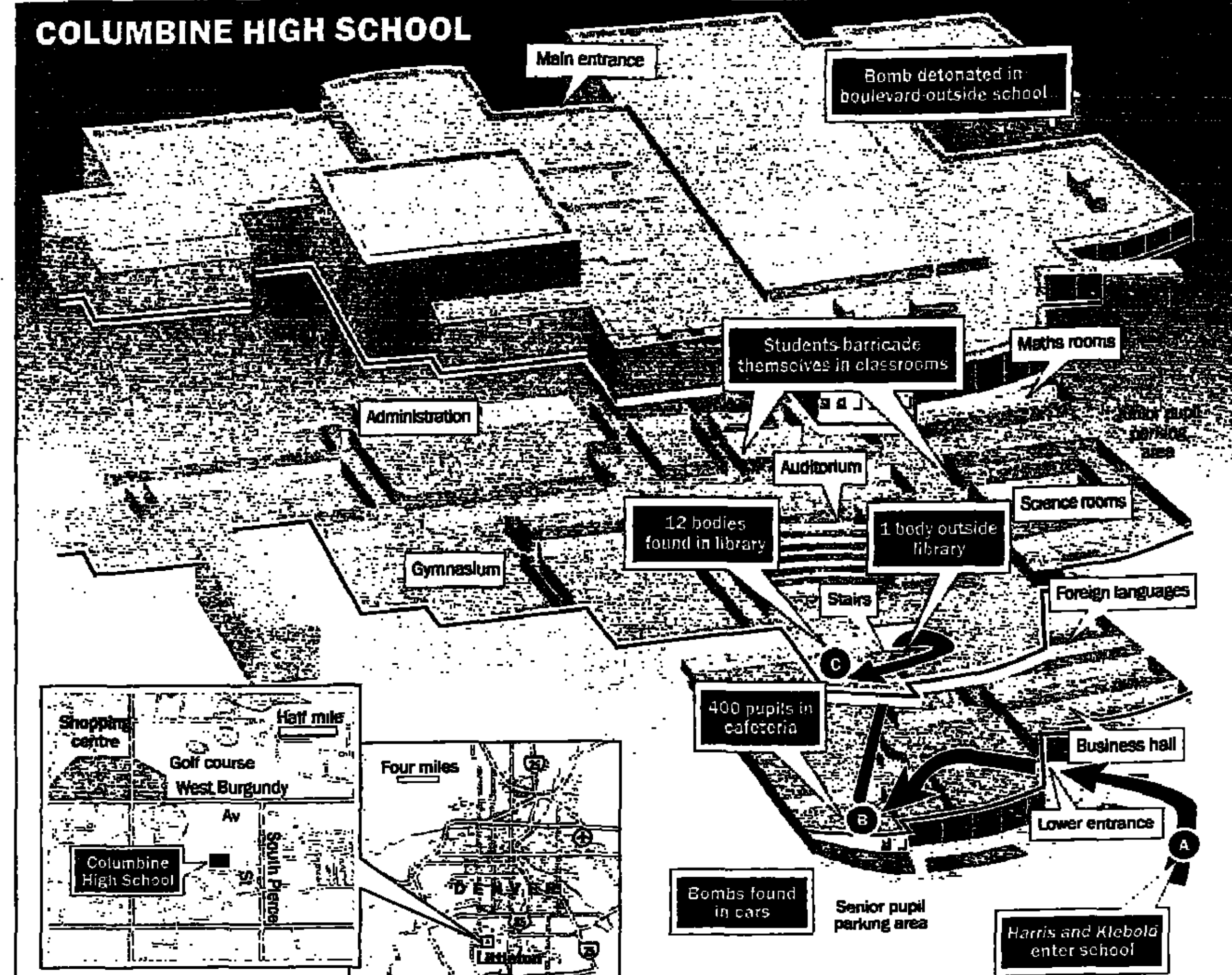
By 8pm, Michael Shoels had still not heard from his 18-year-old black son, Isiah. "It's not looking good," he said at the Leawood waiting area, hours after reports first emerged of a boy being shot because he was black. "It's like a dream I'm trying to wake up from." Those most at risk from two armed teenagers were apparently known athletes and anyone wearing a baseball cap or tracksuit. As the killers entered the library, one announced: "All the jocks stand up. We are going to kill you."

Early reports that Harris and Klebold targeted ethnic minorities may have been exaggerated. One newspaper carried a sombre line-up of photographs of nine injury victims yesterday, but all were white.

LINKS

http://204.98.20.35/ Columbine High School
http://www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/ Centre for the prevention of school violence
http://www.nra.org National Rifle Association
http://www.mjcnet.com/antigun/orgs.htm Anti-gun organisations
http://www.dunblane.braveheart.com/frameset.htm Remembering Dunblane
http://www.fbi.gov FBI web site
http://www.pcvp.org/pcvp/firearms/stats5.html United States Firearms statistics

Lisa Kreutz, left, and Anne Höchholter: both are in hospital with gunshot wounds



CHRONOLOGY OF DEATH IN DENVER

Around 11am: attack begins with bomb thrown *outsdie premises*, and Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold walk inside the school.

11.25: first shots heard outside the cafeteria as *the pair spray* bullets randomly in corridors.

11.30: as first police arrive, the pair start shooting in cafeteria.

11.35: bombs explode in car park, cafeteria and snackroom.

11.40: Harris and Klebold laughing, kill pupils in library with gun fire and pipe bombs.

12.20pm: students hiding in classrooms call family police and media on mobiles.

1.00: first SWAT team arrives after police throw cordon around school.

2.30: final survivors stagger out while police continue to check the building for booby-traps.

4.00: after 15 explosions are heard, the bodies of Harris and Klebold found in *library*.

America watches its first interactive siege

TV coverage horrifies a nation, reports Damian Whitworth

THE drama of the massacre was watched by millions of Americans as it unfolded live on television.

The sheer number of cable television channels covering the event, and the prevalence of mobile telephones among pupils, transformed the unfolding horror into a fully interactive siege. At times, coverage of the event was too complete. With cameras in helicopters trained on the school from every angle there were moments when the networks had to stop transmitting pictures live from the scene and explain to viewers why they were doing so.

The first problem was that some pictures were just too shocking. A camera would zoom in only for producers in the studio and viewers to realise at the same moment that the object lying on the ground was a motionless body. Quickly, there would be a cutaway, to avoid showing a probably dead son or daughter to a worried parent watching at home. When a man covered in blood crashed awkwardly from a window the picture similarly reverted swiftly to the studio.

There were fears that the coverage could be endangering the rescue mission. Police were told that every classroom in the school had a television and feared that the suspects could be watching their every move as they tried to proceed into the building.

Requests were made that no pictures be shown that could identify exactly where the police were entering the building. Not all stations seemed to have got the message. There was also a fear that if the culprits were watching TV they would learn where students were hiding in the school. Some children, watching the news thmselves as they cowered in classrooms and cupboards, phoned local stations which had blazoned their phone numbers across the screen, and gave commentary live on air of what was happening.

One boy, who gave his name as James, said he was hiding in a classroom and could hear the gunmen next door.

The news anchor quickly told him to get off the line and call the police. Another pupil rang to say that he had just fled from a hail of bullets. He was panting and said he was still close to the building and feared the gunmen were near by. A desperate presenter urged him to move further away.

Another distraught student called and launched into a tirade about the ills of society. The presenter, clearly torn between telling the boy to shut up and keep safe and listening to this extraordinary speech, could only sit with her jaw gaping.

Suburb where even leaves are recycled

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

NESTLED at the foot of the Rockies, the comfortable suburb brought to a standstill by the Trenchcoat massacre was until Tuesday the acceptable face of American sprawl.

Thriving on new high-tech jobs, its 40,000 residents support no fewer than 17 shopping centres, and "give back" to their environment by recycling even fallen leaves. But, like the people of nearby Boulder on the death of JonBenet Ramsey, the child beauty queen, they have found something rotten behind their prosperous façade.

"This couldn't have happened here" was a constant refrain by stunned survivors and officials yesterday. Littleton's median household income of $42,000 (£26,000) is 25 per cent higher than the national average, furnishing many high school seniors with their own cars and — as harrowing television footage showed — mobile phones with which to call for help.

Few blacks or latinos live in Littleton. Its 93 per cent white population deprive it of the fuel for ethnic flare-ups that plagued cities such as Los Angeles and even central Denver in the 1980s and early 1990s.

But as the debate over the causes of this latest killing spree ripples outward, the view that fortress-style, mainly white suburbs create a sterile and potentially poisonous atmosphere for teenagers could well gain ground.

Just 15 miles southwest of Denver's skyscrapers, Littleton was founded in 1890 but grew quickly after the Second World War with the arrival of aerospace and electronics firms. It is now a place of gently winding streets, manicured lawns, endless new detached houses — and 49 homeowner associations for their proud occupants.

Columbine High School is one of its core institutions. With 1,800 pupils and lavish facilities including a large theatre and top-class sports grounds, it was described in a recent survey as "a Colorado sports powerhouse".



A student hangs a sign on a cross outside the Light of the World Roman Catholic church in Littleton yesterday

Hitler's birthday gift: a massacre

Continued from page 1

combed the school room by room, freeing several dozen pupils from a choir practice room.

Many reported seeing Dave Sanders, a popular teacher and sports coach, trying to herd youngsters to safety despite bleeding heavily from a chest wound. His fate was still unclear as dawn broke yesterday.

As news of the horror inside the school spread, police established a crime scene half a mile across round its perimeter and parents were directed to a nearby elementary school where lists of survivors' names were pinned up as the lucky ones arrived in buses.

Others ran for safety into houses in the tree-lined streets near the school, using strangers' telephones to call their families. Parents were asked to bring their children's dental records to identify bodies if necessary.

Some vomited at the thought of having to use them.

At 4pm an emergency physician entered the library with police and found the gunmen among the dead. Both had apparently shot themselves in the head, fulfilling Harris's promise on a website that this day — the 110th anniversary of Hilter's birth — would be his last.

The school was declared safe half an hour later, but bomb squads with remote control robots worked through the night scouring any hidden bombs.

Outside, counsellors urged survivors to talk. They did, to a growing army of television crews. "I've never seen anything like it in my life," Nick Foss, 18, told one reporter. "I saw one of my friends with his face shot off."

Churches threw open their doors to offer solace late into the night. In one of them, a Catholic priest addressing packed pews seemed lost for words. Eventually he said: "This is truly the saddest thing I've done in my life."

Emotional Clinton praises bravery

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

IN AN emotional address to an audience of White House volunteers, President Clinton paid tribute to the bravery of the school stuents and the professionalism of the police and doctors at the scene of the massacre.

"We see in a moment of agony what is best for our community and in our country ... Doubtless we will learn more stories of quick-thinking and grace under pressure as the details unfold," Mr Clinton said, before calling for "a moment of silent prayer" for "those who lost their lives, for those who were wounded, for their families and those who love them and care for their community".

White House officials offered no suggestions for tightening US gun control laws, but said that a review was under way to see if any government action was required to improve school safety.

"We have some ideas about a juvenile justice Bill, but at this point have not yet focused on the policy implications," Joe Lockhart, the White House spokesman, said. "From the position of the federal government we would acknowledge that there are limits to what we can do."

"All of us are struggling to understand exactly what happened and why," Mr Clinton said.

Tony Blair sent a message of sympathy to President Clinton yesterday, expressing "shock and dismay" over the killings in Denver. He was joined in his expression of sympathy by the Tories and the Liberal Democrats.

Mr Blair said that following the Dunblane tragedy, the killings in the United States would evoke many emotions across Britain. He added that the decision to ban handguns after Dunblane had been "the right one", ensuring a brighter future in the UK.





A Swat prepares for a final search. The risk of booby traps had forced them to leave the dead where they fell



Pupils help a distraught friend after being evacuated. The killers talked about guns and bombs at school

Smart mavericks capable of a terrible violence

Schoolmates tell **Giles Whittell** of trenchcoated youth's rage against life

LIKE the dead and injured, they came from middle-class families. They were not victims of broken homes. They were both "smart" and "gifted", and they enjoyed tenpin bowling. Yet something about life had soured them in the most brutal way.

Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold went to war on Tuesday having given plenty of warning. They and their friends wore armbands saying "I hate people" and scrawled messages like "Kill all athletes" in their school lavatories — but to prosperous Littleton, nothing about them seemed worth taking seriously.

The first two martyrs of the Trenchcoat Mafia turned up for a pre-school bowling class before their massacre seeming calm, others were there recalled. Three days earlier they had gone to a New York-theme party after the school prom "in pretty good spirits", according to a friend.

Most fellow pupils at Columbine High School knew of the Trenchcoat Mafia's sinister garb. Some knew they wrote dark poetry, immersed themselves in World War Two history and the heavy metal of Marilyn Manson, and were liable to offer "Heil Hitler" as a greeting. The idea that they would carry out their threats was, however, unthinkable.

"I knew they were capable of violence. I just didn't know they would actually do it," said Pauline Colby, a former member of the teenage gang. "They were very angry, but they didn't know how to release their anger. They were angry about people not accepting them and no one knowing how smart they were."

They were "jerks", "outcasts" or "satanists", depending on who you talked to at their school. But some actually liked them, and their insights only deepen the mystery of why the two boiled over.

"He was into guns and stuff like that, but he was pretty nice to me," said Mike Vendegnia, a fellow pupil who played fantasy baseball with Klebold. "He was just a normal kid." Joe Mallon agreed. "He never really got angry at anyone." The same was not true of Harris, whose sworn enemies were the school's sports stars: its "jocks".

"He was going after jocks," Harris's friend, Brooks Brown, said emphatically after the shooting: "He hated them with a passion because they always made fun of him and threatened him. They did it especially in his sophomore [second] year."

The pair may have used guns belonging to Harris's father, a retired military officer, sources told yesterday's *Denver Post*.

They were also often heard at school discussing how to obtain assault weapons and Uzi-style machine pistols. Besides building websites for a hobby, they built bombs.

"We found pipe bombs, incendiary bombs and propane bombs with nails and timing devices," Sheriff John Stone said yesterday, when the risk of more explosions forced police to leave the dead where they had fallen.

Neighbours reported hearing sawing and grinding noises from the closed garage at the Harris home in a Littleton cul-de-sac last week — noises that could have been from a makeshift bomb factory.

By Tuesday evening Brooks Brown, for one, was seeing things clearly with the benefit of hindsight.

Harris "did it because he hated people", he said. "He loved the idea of killing people. That's how I knew it would end the way that this did."

Trenchcoat Mafia

We are Josh, Joe, Chris, Horst, Chuck, Brian, Pauline, Nicole, Kristen, Krista, plus Tad, Alex, Cory. Who says we're different? Insanity's healthy! Remember rocking parties at Kristen's, foos-ball at Joe's, and fencing at Christopher's! Stay alive, stay different, stay crazy! Oh, and stay away from CREAM SODA!! Love Always, The Chicks

Recipe for pipe bombs on Net

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

HOME-MADE "pipe bombs" like those left scattered around the Colorado school can be built at minimal cost using a recipe available on the Internet, according to US police who describe bomb-making as a growing craze among American teenagers.

The 30 or more bombs found by police searching Columbine High School were made from such easily obtainable household items as propane, petrol and soap.

Hundreds of books and manuals, as well as many Internet sites, provide instructions on how to combine the ingredients to make bombs that are easy to conceal and devastatingly powerful. A metal pipe bomb less than a foot long can contain enough explosive to kill at a range of 400ft.

More than a third of bomb-related incidents in the US involve juveniles with home-made devices. Attempts to restrict the flow of bomb-making information have run foul of the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of speech.

Internet discussion groups routinely exchange tips on bomb-making, and one site offers instructions on "bleach bombs", "jug bombs" and letter bombs.

"There's a lot of information on the Internet, home recipes and such, and there's nothing much we can do about it," Dan Boeh, of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, said recently after a pipe bomb had been placed by two teenagers outside a state police barracks in Indiana.

Last year local authorities in Washington DC issued a pamphlet offering tips on how to spot if a child is a secret bomb-maker. "Generally these teenagers excel at academic activities," the pamphlet said.

FBI alerted to bomb website

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA Online contacted the FBI yesterday about the content posted on its service by one of the gunmen in the Colorado school massacre.

A search had shown that Eric Harris maintained a website through AOL, an Internet service provider, that included two pages about making pipe bombs and other explosives.

But Kim McCreery, an AOL spokeswoman, said that there was no immediate evidence that anyone had posted warnings on the Internet before the shootings.

She was responding to what had been considered a warning on another member's profile that said: "Preparin' for the big April 20. You'll all be sorry that day." She pointed out that after big news events members' profiles often flooded with hoaxes.

At the scene of the shootings, a Sheriff's spokesman, Steve Davis, said that police had been unable to find a motive for the shooting, but they had heard speculation that it was connected to the anniversary of the birth of Adolf Hitler.

Other pupils told investigators that the Trenchcoat Mafia, a group of a dozen pupils linked to the two suspects, wore swastikas on their clothes and liked to discuss Hitler.

"They took real pride in him. It was creepy," one girl told reporters.

Within hours of the shootings, messages from people purporting to be the Trenchcoat Mafia surfaced on the Internet. Early on Tuesday evening a search turned up 22 hits. Two hours later there were 29.

In his AOL member profile, Harris, who killed himself after the shootings, described his hobbies as: "Professional doom and doom, creator, meeting beautiful females, being cool."

Clinton avoids weapons issue

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

In an emotional speech evoking the "horror and agony" of the Colorado massacre yesterday, Bill Clinton pointedly avoided any reference to gun-control, knowing only too well the bitter passions aroused by attempts to restrain America's enduring love affair with guns.

The Clinton presidency has scored some notable successes in its efforts to control guns, but it has also been exposed to the full rage of the pro-gun lobby and the strength of the nation's ingrained attachment to firearms.

Administration officials concede that any programme for the radical overhaul of US gun laws, such as Britain's clampdown on weapons following the Dunblane massacre, is doomed to failure. Recent efforts to introduce legislation, such as a Bill to close the loophole that allows private individuals to sell weapons at gun shows without carrying out background checks, have been rebuffed by the Republican-dominated congress.

Rather than raise the incendiary issue of restricting gun ownership or sales, Mr Clinton has instead blamed the Denver massacre on "violent images and experiences that warp young perspectives and obscure the consequences of violence".

"In the days ahead we will do all we can to see what else we can do," he said, with a studied vagueness bourne of repeated and painful clashes over gun-control.

Although a native of Arkansas, where gun-ownership is close to a religion and children of any age can own rifles or shotguns, Mr Clinton has earned the undying enmity of the gun lobby with his efforts to bring in weapons legislation.

Last year, after the playground killings in Jonesboro, Arkansas, he banned the import of 58 types of assault weapon in a major blow to the National Rifle Association (NRA), which accused the president of "bending the law".

"There are still too many children in harm's way. You don't need an Uzi to go deer hunting and you don't need an AK-47 to go skeet shooting. These are weapons of war, they are not needed for a day in the country," Mr Clinton said.

The order, which immediately prevented 1.5 million high-powered guns from coming onto the US market, followed two earlier efforts to outlaw the guns. A 1989 ban by president George Bush and another by Mr Clinton in 1994 foundered when manufacturers made minute modifications to the weapons, allowing them to be classified as sporting rifles.

Mr Clinton was also responsible for pushing through the highly controversial Brady Bill in 1993, the first successful effort to regulate guns for 25 years, which required a five-day waiting period following the purchase of a handgun to allow police checks.

The bill was named after former White House press secretary James Brady, the living symbol of the campaign for greater gun control, who was permanently disabled in the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan in 1981. The White House says the measure has prevented at least 250,000 "unsuitable" Americans with criminal, mental or drug records from obtaining guns — although part of the bill was later struck down by the Supreme Court.

The NRA and other pro-gun lobbying groups insist such efforts represent a direct infringement of the constitutional "right to keep and bear arms". But Mr Clinton has also come under fire from groups demanding tougher restrictions, who claim that a general ban on specific classes of weapons would have far more effect than a "piecemeal" approach.

US Attorney General Janet Reno yesterday argued that stricter gun control laws were not a complete solution to youth violence. "We've got to make sure young people have the counseling, the support to help them come to grips with the anger of their life," she said.

Meanwhile, announcing his candidacy for President yesterday, conservative Gary Bauer, a fierce opponent of gun control, ascribed the Colorado killings to moral degeneration

HOLLYWOOD VETERAN SEEKS HOMELY IMAGE FOR GUN CAMPAIGNERS

Heston: says handguns help to prevent crime

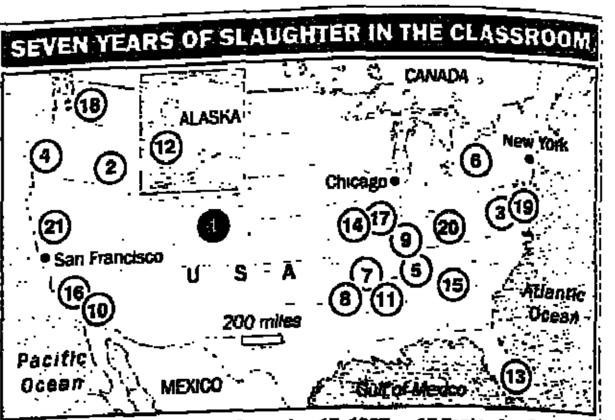
Washington: Charlton Heston is leading the National Rifle Association's charm offensive (Ian Brodie writes). The idea is to show that the lobby group is made up of ordinary folk who are just trying to defend their constitutional freedoms, including the right to bear arms.

The best way to deter crime is to allow law-abiding citizens to carry handguns, the Hollywood star, 74, says. Giving people the right to carry concealed weapons creates a "climate of uncertainty" for criminals. "In a world where the wolves can't tell the lions from the sheep, the entire flock is safe."

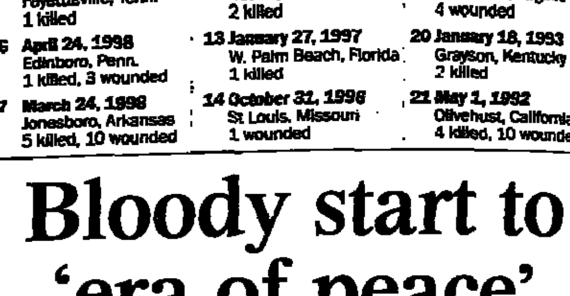
But school shootings are making things harder for pro-gun campaigns. Yesterday, after the Colorado massacre, the NRA was not returning calls. Its critics were out in force. "The NRA is slowly losing ground, but is still very powerful," said Osha Gray Davidson, author of a critique of the organisation. He thinks its claimed membership of three million is inflated by hundreds of thousands. According to Handgun Control, which campaigns for laws to curb guns, the NRA spent $3.4 million (£2.12 million) in support of pro-gun candidates in last November's Congressional elections.

Even without the NRA, guns would be part of American life, as they have been through the Wars of Independence, the Civil War, the taming of the frontier, and despite the rule of the Mafia and inner-city drugs networks. Violence, in films and television, is at the heart of much of today's popular culture.

SEVEN YEARS OF SLAUGHTER IN THE CLASSROOM



1 **April 20, 1999** Denver, Colorado 15 killed
2 **April 16, 1999** Notus, Idaho No one injured
3 **June 15, 1998** Richmond, Virginia 2 wounded
4 **May 21, 1998** Springfield, Oregon 2 killed, 22 wounded
5 **May 19, 1998** Fayetteville, Tenn. 1 killed
6 **April 24, 1998** Edinboro, Penn. 1 killed, 3 wounded
7 **March 24, 1998** Jonesboro, Arkansas 5 killed, 10 wounded
8 **December 15, 1997** Stamps, Arkansas 2 wounded
9 **December 1, 1997** Paducah, Kentucky 3 killed, 5 wounded
10 **October 22, 1997** Norwalk, California 1 killed
11 **October 1, 1997** Pearl, Mississippi 2 killed, 7 wounded
12 **February 19, 1997** Bethel, Alaska 2 killed
13 **January 27, 1997** W. Palm Beach, Florida 1 killed
14 **October 31, 1996** St Louis, Missouri 1 wounded
15 **September 25, 1996** Atlanta, Georgia 1 killed
16 **July 26, 1996** Los Angeles, Calif. 2 wounded
17 **July 26, 1996** St Louis, Missouri 1 killed, 1 wounded
18 **February 2, 1996** Moses Lake, Wash. 3 killed, 1 wounded
19 **October 30, 1995** Richmond, Virginia 4 wounded
20 **January 18, 1993** Grayson, Kentucky 2 killed
21 **May 1, 1992** Olivehurst, California 4 killed, 10 wounded



Bloody start to 'era of peace'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

THE bloodshed in Colorado comes just weeks after Richard Riley, US Education Secretary, hailed a new era of peace in the country's schools, citing measures to combat youth violence and bring greater community involvement by parents and teachers.

A 1997 survey found that one in five high school students had recently carried a gun, but the Littleton killings were the first at school since last July. Then a Florida man shot his wife, a teacher, before shooting himself.

Last October, after six school killings in a year left 14 dead, President Clinton convened a conference on youth violence. In April a plan was unveiled to award more than $300 million (£186 million) to communities to prevent such violence by stopping truancy, courses on resolving conflicts, new security equipment and promoting after-school activities.

The programme also included $80 million for hiring community police officers and $40 million for counselling youths deemed most at risk. Some Republicans claimed that the steps were merely a sign of the President "pandering" for votes before congressional elections.

Three weeks ago the Government began accepting applications for the funds. Janet Reno, US Attorney-General, said: "When law enforcement works in partnership with our schools and our health professionals and with parents and the whole community, we can prevent violence."

Carolyn McCarthy, a Democratic Congress member, has been pushing for a Bill to require child-locks on handguns and the revoking of the licences of dealers selling weapons to minors.

England's saint a cover for fascists

BY STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

CELEBRATING Hitler's birthday has become a low-key affair for Britain's neo-Nazis. According to Gerry Gable, publisher of *Searchlight*, which monitors the extreme Right, there are probably no more than 500 members of the British National Party who mark the occasionin the back bar of a friendly pub or the function room of a small hotel.

Searchlight estimates that the day might also be marked by about 50 members of Combat 18, which claimed to have planted the Brixton nail bomb last weekend.

Some groups use St George's Day, this Friday, as a cover to celebrate the Führer's birthday. At least two private meetings and socials are being planned this weekend at hotels in Lancashire and the Midlands. Mr Gable said one businessman who lives in Suffolk was well-known for his annual parties.



Gloomy tribal craze that was born in Britain

Damian Whitworth on the origins of a sub-culture exported to America

THE goth sub-culture *from* which Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris emerged began in Britain among the followers of doom-laden, post-punk rock bands.

It has grown to embrace a plethora of diverse youth tribes including devil worshippers and followers of vampirism. When adolescents started dyeing their hair black and painting their faces white at the beginning of the 1980s they were just deemed a little odd, but a threat to no one.

They were particularly prevalent in Leeds for some reason, and then began to colonise the pokier corners of London. They enjoyed being gloomy, moping around in darkened rooms by day listening to dreary songs swamped by heavy guitars and drums.

They then emerged at night, clad head to toe in black, to attend the bands' concerts. They were more likely to be university students who had overdosed on Shelley or Edgar Allan Poe than seriously antisocial crazies.

But as the movement spread to America more and more fringe groups emerged. There are dozens of goth websites containing long, rambling explanations of goth culture. "Generally the personality of a goth is kind of dark," says one typical site. "There is some focus on death, but once again we are not trying to be evil. We live in a society that shuns the thought of death. Goths are not obsessed with death. They just don't fear it."

There have been persistent claims that many American teenagers have developed a fascination with bloody medieval behaviour after becoming obsessed with fantasy role-playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons. Sessions can last for days as the wildest and goriest dreams are fulfilled by the roll of a dice.

The gothic lifestyle and role-playing games became the subject of sometimes hystercial national debate after the "vampire murders" of 1996 in which a suburban Florida couple were killed by teenage members of a vampire cult.

The gang had become involved in vampirism after steeping themselves in a role-playing game called Vampire: the Masquerade. Andy Griesser, the author of a book on blood drinkers, said that thousands were involved in vampirism. There has been huge controversy too about Marilyn Manson, the androgynous male singer and high priest of goth, who professes Satanic sympathies and is reported to have been a favourite of Klebold and Harris.

The black trenchcoats that the two killers apparently wore all the time, rain or shine, may also be significant and indicate that the boys had strayed to the outer reaches of society. Trenchcoats are used as a symbol of Nazism on a number of websites and fellow students have attested that the boys expressed white supremacist views.

One said: "They always have the neo-Nazi look, so we were talking about them and Hitler's birthday even before the shooting started. Everybody knew it was Hitler's birthday."

On one website a skeleton can be seen dancing above a fire and the words "The Trenchcoat". A poem includes the lines: "There will be no performance today/There will be no curtain call/He can no longer perform for you/So witness the grandest spectacle of all/It's a one-night engagement/So make your way to the front/It's the death of a jester/It's one dead man's show./There are no mourners today/Only spectators at the scene/Relishing in this bizarre event . . .



Heavy metal star Marilyn Manson, who named himself after Charles Manson

Cult following of rock star who apes serial killer

By Elizabeth Judge

MARILYN MANSON is a heavy metal star and self-styled "anti-Christ" with a cult following in America and Britain.

His band's official website includes a "Shrine to Marilyn Manson" page and a "Marilyn Manson Altar". Visitors to the site can join the "I hate God" web-ring. Yesterday messages left by people who had logged on included "Manson is God and I am sick of people judging him," and "I would do anything for Manson".

Manson, 31, was born in Ohio as Brian Warner but renamed himself after the murderer Charles Manson. Other members of the four-strong band, which is based in Florida, are named after a child-killer, a murderer and a stalker. Their last British concert, at the Brixton Academy in December, was a sell-out. The group are appearing at Glastonbury this year and will perform alongside the rock group Metallica at a one-day event at Milton Keynes in July.

On their first tour to Britain in 1996, they were not made to feel so welcome. Their reputation had preceded them, with rumours of animal sacrifices and lurid sex acts being part of their show. Westminster Council would not let them use a venue in the borough.

The last of the three albums Manson has released, *Mechanical Animals*, has sold more than two million copies in America. One of the songs includes the line: "And I was a hand grenade that never stopped exploding. You were automatic and as hollow as the 'o' in God."

Last year, Manson, who is engaged to the actress Rose McGowan, published his autobiography, *The Long Hard Road out of Hell*, an account of a dysfunctional American outsider who becomes a superstar.

John Harris, Editor of *Select* music magazine, said it would be wrong to ban Manson's music: "It would be totally wrong to link the music with the killings in Denver. I am sure those children eat burgers as well but we would not ban them."

DiCaprio role as killer in trenchcoat

From Damian Whitworth in Washington

IN the film the carnage was all a dream. But the grim reality of the Colorado shootings has focused fresh attention on the controversial movie *The Basketball Diaries*.

The film includes a dream sequence in which a former high-school basketball player, played by Leonardo DiCaprio, opens fire on children and teachers. DiCaprio is seen wearing a black trenchcoat similar to those that were worn by the suspects at Columbine High School.



Poster for film linked to youth violence

The movie is already the subject of a $130 million (£80 million) suit brought by families who claim that it inspired the shooting at a Kentucky high school in 1997 in which a 14-year-old boy killed three pupils. Michael Carneal has said that he was partly inspired by the film to attack a prayer group.

Seagram and Sony, makers of violent video games that Carneal enjoyed playing, have also been named in the suit, which is seeking $30 million in compensation and $100 million in punitive damages.

In a separate case, the family of a woman who claims she was the victim of a copycat shooting inspired by Oliver Stone's film *Natural Born Killers* were given permission to sue the director. The Supreme Court rejected Mr Stone's claim that the film was protected by constitutional free-speech rights.



DiCaprio as he appears in *Basketball Diaries*

Widow's record £7m goes to the dogs

By Christine Middap

A CHELSEA widow has left £7 million to the Canine Defence League. It is the biggest single legacy left to an animal charity.

Her executor, Neil Eastwood, said that Nora Fielden Hecksher, 80, who had no children, was "a very charming lady who loved dogs. Despite her wealth she lived frugally and was more interested in the comfort of dogs than herself."

National Canine Defence League director Siobhan Lavelle said the charity was "absolutely stunned and moved" by the generous bequest.

She said the charity would use the money to help to achieve its aim of ensuring that no healthy dog in Britain was destroyed. The league received £13 million from donations last year, and its largest bequest had previously been nearly £500,000.

Mrs Hecksher's personal wealth grew from a trust fund established by her Liverpool-based family, who were in the animal feed industry. She had always loved dogs and had adopted many from the Battersea Dogs' Home.

Charity begins with the rich in hard times

Alexander Frean reports on the agencies that seek out philanthropic millionaires

CHARITIES are spending thousands of pounds buying access to confidential lists of millionaires in an attempt to reverse the decline in individual giving.

Firms that specialise in tracking down people capable of making donations of up to £500,000 report a growing interest in their services from voluntary organisations of all sizes. They can provide details of people's wealth, interests and family circumstances, enabling charities to target those most likely to be sympathetic to their causes.

Since the advent of the National Lottery five years ago, there has been a 31 per cent drop in personal donations to charity. Average monthly gifts have fallen from £10.08 in 1993 to £8.54.

Andrew Thomas, chief executive of Charity Consultants, which has a database of around 40,000 potential donors, said there was an art to extracting money from the rich. "The first thing to remember is, don't ask for too little. In the ten years I have been in this business I have only twice had someone give more than was asked for."

He said that charities often had no idea how many very rich donors they already had on their mailing lists. One major charity had been surprised recently to receive a cheque for £500,000 from an individual supporter after it had made an emergency relief appeal through a routine mail shot.

On another occasion, when asked to analyse a charity's mailing list of 80,000 names, Mr Thomas discovered, much to the charity's surprise, that it contained at least 700 individuals capable of making gifts of up to £500,000.

Mr Thomas, who addressed the annual Charityfair conference in London yesterday, advises charities not to write begging letters but to engineer meetings with potential donors, either by approaching them through a well-placed contact or inviting them to a champagne reception at a gallery or museum, or an open day at the charity's head office.

The best potential donors are those brought up in the 1960s and 1970s. They have a strong desire to "help the world", Mr Thomas says and include self-made millionaires and those at a crossroads in their lives.

Robin Jones from The Factary, the Bristol-based fundraising consultants, said it was important for charities to approach only individuals known to have an interest in their cause.

His company compiles profiles of likely donors by monitoring the press, the Internet and company reports, and scouring *Debrett's Peerage* and *Who's Who*.

Caroline Abrahams of the National Children's Bureau, which is hiring a donor fundraiser, said: "Targeting major donors is a fairly cost effective way of raising money."

A spokeswoman for Oxfam said that it had hired a specialist firm to analyse its existing mailing list and identify potential donors. "It is of limited use, but it does work. This year we received a donation of nearly £1 million. It was a very nice surprise."



The 600-year-old bonsai tree that once adorned the Japanese emperor's hotel room

Imperial bonsai may fetch £50,000 at Sotheby's

By Robin Young

THE ancient art of bonsai is to return to the London auction rooms for the first time in more than a century, with one miniature tree expected to fetch about £50,000 when it is sold in June.

The 600-year-old yew, *Taxus cuspidata*, is known as "The tree of the emperor's gaze". It became well known at the end of the last century when it was placed in a room in the Otaru Hotel used by the Japanese emperor when he visited Hokkaido island to inspect the herring catch.

The tree is a *yamadori*, a naturally stunted specimen originally collected from the wild in the mountains. *Yamadori* are rare and valuable now that restrictions have been placed on collecting specimens and most bonsai are raised by painstaking horticultural techniques designed to mimic the effects of growing where trees are exposed to the elements in rocky or craggy mountain regions.

Mark Hill, bonsai expert at Sotheby's, the auction house that is staging the sale on June 17 as part of its Asia Week, said yesterday that a £50,000 value would probably represent the top end of the bonsai market in Europe.

☐ http://www.sotheby.com is the Sotheby's website.

How modern trees took root

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE tree that dominated the Earth's forests 370 million years ago had almost all the characteristics of its modern equivalents, scientists have discovered.

Specimens found recently in the Moroccan Sahara show that *Archaeopteris* had huge roots, a branching trunk, lateral buds on both branch and trunk, and could live for more than a century. The sum of knowledge about the extinct tree had previously been small because researchers had only been able to study pieces of its trunk.

Archaeopteris is now known to have been a large conifer-like tree, growing to 60 feet or more, but its leaves were like those of ferns and it spread by releasing spores. It made up to 90 per cent of the forests in the late Devonian period, when plants greatly reduced carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere and boosted the levels of oxygen.

"*Archaeopteris* made the world almost a modern world in terms of ecosystems that surround us now," Professor Stephen Scheckler of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University said in *Nature*.

Professor Scheckler, Dr Brigitte Meyer-Berthaud of the University of Montpellier and Dr Jobst Wendt of the University of Tübingen went to Morocco last year to look for specimens.

"In three days, we filled a truck," he said. "It was the first time we had seen trunk branching on *Archaeopteris*, and we found hundreds of examples. And we also found big roots, which had previously been mostly conjecture."

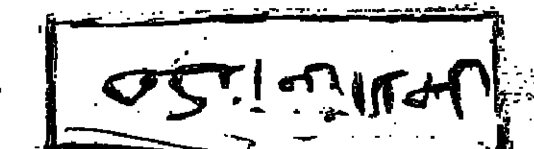
The trees had lateral buds that enabled them to keep growing when its leading tip died, a feature unique among plants of that era. It was also the longest-living of its time.

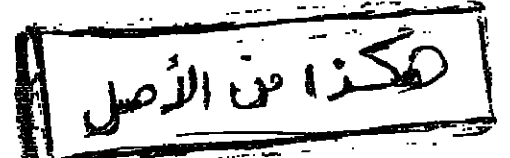
"Other plants ran out of ability to grow," Professor Scheckler said. "These trees could grow for 100 years or more."










هكذا من الأصل

Silcott ally's trouble with the law

THE SILCOTT FILE



WINSTON Silcott was jailed for life for the murder of PC Keith Blakelock, who died after receiving 42 knife and machete wounds in *the Broadwater Farm* riots. PC Blakelock, 40, had three children.

Silcott's conviction was quashed by the Court of Appeal in 1991 after tests suggested that police might have fabricated evidence against him. He received about £17,000 compensation for his wrongful conviction.

In 1988 Silcott had been convicted of the murder of Anthony Smith, 22, a boxer, during a fight at a party. He claimed he had acted in self-defence. The Criminal Cases Review Commission last year declined a request from Silcott's lawyers to refer the Smith case to the Court of Appeal on the ground of fresh evidence.

Convicted rapist claims repeated arrests are racial harassment by police. **Dominic Kennedy** reports

A LEADING member of the campaign to secure Winston Silcott's freedom, who has accused the police of racially harassing him, has another reason why officers might regard him in an unfavourable light. Fifteen years ago Delroy Lindo, then a newly married disc jockey, was jailed for 30 months by an Old Bailey judge for rape.

But is that enough to explain why Mr Lindo has had to go to court to fight nine minor charges in the past three years, and been cleared of every one of them, or is Mr Lindo, now a 39-year-old father-of-three, justified in his claim that he has been persistently arrested by officers in a brutal campaign of victimisation for publicly supporting his childhood friend?

Mr Lindo says he has been harassed by the police sincehe began supporting Silcott, who was convicted of murdering PC Keith Blakelock in the Broadwater Farm riots in 1985 but was cleared on appeal eight years ago.

A year before the constable's death, Mr Lindo had been imprisoned for the rape of a 20-year-old typist. Could this be a reason for the police's scrutiny?

Mr Lindo has become one of the loudest voices against police racism. In February he delivered a petition to Downing Street as part of an anti-racism march, and he has helped to organise demonstrations against the force. He has issued a writ against the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, alleging malicious prosecution, assault and false imprisonment, which Scotland Yard has said it will defend.

Is it because of his high-profile campaigning against the police that Mr Lindo has been stopped 11 times and had to go to court on six occasions during the past three years?

He has been acquitted of nine offences, including breach of the peace, threatening behaviour, assault, criminal damage, obstruction and having an illegible car numberplate. His wife, Sonia, 37, a housing officer, was cleared of breaching the peace.

Mr Lindo's case has been highlighted in the national, local and ethnic minority press. The *Independent on Sunday* devoted an article to his complaints in September under the headline "Who'd Be Silcott's Friend?". *The Weekly Gleaner*, a newspaper for the West Indian community, described Mr and Mrs Lindo as the victims of a police hate campaign.

Neighbours distressed by seeing the couple arrested outside their home in Hornsey, North London, wrote to Sir Paul about "a case of total harassment on the part of the police". The letter said: "They are lovely people, totally distraught at what is going on."

During the 1980s, Mr Lindo and Silcott ran a mobile discotheque. Mr Lindo was jailed in 1984 for raping the typist on the day he returned from his honeymoon. The Old Bailey judge said it was a nasty attack, aggravated by violence and sexual indignities.

According to a trial report in a North London weekly newspaper, Mr Lindo grabbed the woman at a disco, took her to a school playing field, hit her and raped her. Mr Lindo said she had invented the allegation to get revenge on him for marrying.

After the riots on the Broadwater Farm estate in Tottenham, the police arrested Silcott, who was already on bail for the murder of Anthony Smith, a boxer, and he was accused him of killing PC Blakelock. "I knew nothing about campaigning but I just knew I had to do something to help my friend," Mr Lindo, an unemployed housing official, said recently. "I started campaigning for him. I became a target from then."

The spate of arrests in the past three years coincided with a period when Mr Lindo was the driving force behind Silcott's unsuccessful campaign to be cleared of the Smith murder, for which he is serving life.

This week a jury at Wood Green Crown Court, North Lon-don, took 50 minutes to deliver a unanimous not guilty verdict after Mr Lindo's two-day trial for dangerous driving.

Afterwards, asked about his rape conviction, Mr Lindo said: "That's got nothing to do with it. Why would they want to target me for anything to do with that? They arrested me for the riots, didn't they?

"It's just unbelievable that you could be fishing around, to be trying to discredit me in such a way now. They have made it quite clear at the police station and during arrest that it is about Winston Silcott. My wife has no convictions at all. Why her?

Mr Lindo has a point. His criminal record is legally spent and he has not been in trouble for 12 years. No one else in the area has been arrested and subsequently acquitted so frequently. So why does it keep happening?

There is speculation that senior police officers are now keen to avoid more wrangles with Mr Lindo, and there may be an out-of-court settlement of his writ. Meanwhile, Silcott is as firmly behind bars as ever.

A spokesman for the Metropolitan Police said yesterday: "There are currently outstanding complaints. There is still an outstanding civil action. No date has been decided for a hearing."

ADRIAN SHERRATT



Delroy and Sonia Lindo with supporters outside the court where he was cleared of his ninth charge in three years

Adulterous officer loses sex bias case

BY HELEN JOHNSTONE

A SENIOR officer dismissed from the Army after an adulterous affair with a high-ranking Wren, who has since been recommended for promotion, was not a victim of sexual discrimination, an employment tribunal ruled yesterday.

The tribunal found that a woman Army officer behaving in the same way would have faced the same punishment. Keith Pople, 42, a lieutenant-colonel, appeared before a military court last April after a three-year affair with the Wren, whom he met while they were both working at the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall.

He was later sacked, despite being acquitted of scandalous conduct or conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline. The tribunal, at Southampton, had been told that the 34-year-old Wren, who cannot be named for legal reasons, had kept her job because the Royal Navy adopted a more lenient approach than the Army to social misconduct.

After the ruling, Mr Pople's solicitor expressed deep disappointment that the defence ministry had managed to defeat the claim on technical grounds. Lawyers for the Defence Secretary had argued that each of the Services has individual powers over its personnel.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sellafield plutonium missing in Irish Sea

More than a third of the plutonium released into the sea from the Sellafield nuclear complex in Cumbria seems to have disappeared.

It had been assumed that the plutonium was trapped in sediments in the Irish Sea, but radioactivity monitoring shows a "shortfall" that represents 36 per cent of the plutonium released. Scientists believe that it may have been trapped in sand or washed to Scotland and Scandanavia.

Murdoch Baxter, former director of the International *Atomic Energy Agency's* Marine Environment Laboratory, told *New Scientist* that the discrepancies were "disappointing". "Having made these excessive releases into the nearshore environment of a populated area ... they claimed for decades that almost all the plutonium had remained in Irish Sea sediments" he said.

A spokesman for British Nuclear Fuels, which runs the plant, said that to get figures to match so closely over such a long period was a good result.

Verdict of killing

Eric Nicholls, 64, a former mechanic, of Sulhampstead, Berkshire, was jailed for 30 months for the manslaughter of a neighbour Anthony Jones, 82, a retired major, whom he beat with a walking stick.

Murder remand

Harry Pennells, 74, a former lorry driver, of Ticehurst, East Sussex, was remanded in custody accused of murdering an unknown woman, whose beaten body was found in Bedgebury Forest, Kent, in 1979.

Sex charges

Five men have been charged with indecent assault against former pupils of Stonyhurst College near Clitheroe in Lancashire, a leading Roman Catholic public school. Police predict further arrests.

Body in pond

The naked body of a man, badly beaten about the head, has been found in a pond at Bicester, Oxfordshire. Police said the unidentified man, in his late 20s, had been in the pond for only a few days.

Crazy comeback

The Osmonds are in talks to play in Britain after a Virgin Atlantic advertising campaign used their 1972 hit *Crazy Horses* as a backing track. The American group also plans to re-release the single.

Carpet cleans up

A 1300-year-old scrap of carpet has fetched £29,900 at Bonhams in London. The 1ft-square remnant, found on a Cairo dump, is dirty and holed but is one of the oldest specimens of its kind.

Birthday Queen is the toast of Korea

Hosts make a song and dance of the celebrations, writes **Alan Hamilton**

THE Queen celebrated her 73rd birthday yesterday with a trip to the countryside, a glass of rice wine, an armful of trinkets and an airline lunch of cold beef. Like most women her age, she said she didn't want a fuss.

But she did not escape entirely scot-free. At a concert in Seoul last night Lesley Garrett, the Doncaster diva, accompanied by a choir of Korean schoolchildren, sang a surprise rendition of *Happy Birthday*, and the Queen looked genuinely touched, smiling and nodding her approval with the hint of a tear in her eye.

When she subsequently appeared on stage with her guest, President Kim Dae Jung, to meet the performers, the packed house of 1,700 Britons and Koreans rose and gave her a full minute's standing ovation, which she acknowledged with a warm and broad smile. "Thank you very much; that was lovely," she said to Ms Garrett.

Earlier, on the third day of her state visit to Korea, the Queen escaped the traffic and smog of Seoul, flying 150 miles south to the preserved heritage village of Hahoe, which despite its primary function as a tourist magnet still has a permanent population of 290. There has been a settlement here since about the time Caesar first visited Britain.

Ushered into the open courtyard of a traditional wooden house, the Queen met the occupant, Ryu Young-Ha, whose family has lived there for generations. Several of Mr Ryu's female relatives squatted on the ground amid an array of clay pots and bowls.

One was preparing a vat of *kimchi*, a wicked pickle of cabbage, chilli and garlic. "It preserves the food, does it?" asked the Queen, her nose wrinkling imperceptibly. It also preserves a respectful distance between the *kimchi* eater and those who enjoy fresh air.

Followed by her entourage, the Queen was directed into the inner apartments of the house — but not before being gently reminded to take off her shoes. Inside, she sat at a table laid for tea: although she was not offered any.


Villagers awaiting the arrival of the Queen in Hahoe

Up the crowded village street and past an ox-ploughing demonstration, the Queen was welcomed at the Talking House, the equivalent of the village hall, by a troupe of masked dancers performing a short version of a three-hour satire on medieval rural life.

The village had wanted to lay on a full-scale birthday celebration, but the Queen's advance party had insisted that she wanted something simple. Villagers carried out a birthday table groaning with sweetmeats, savouries, rice and almond cakes, a miniature tree dripping with candies — all the fare of an important Korean birthday, usually celebrated at 60 or 70.

Kim Jong-Heung, one of the masked dancers, was chosen to do the honours as he too was celebrating a birthday — his 46th. He poured two gold cups of rice wine and toasted the Queen with *Seang chin chuka hamnida*, Korean for *Happy Birthday*. "You too," his guest replied, and the crowd applauded.

After a brief stop at a wholesale fruit and vegetable market, the Queen left with a gift of a basket of fruit including local apples. Next she went to a hilltop Buddhist monestary, for no reason other than it was there. The chief monk, the Venerable Moon-In, led the Queen up 13 steep stone steps to view his three golden Buddhas and invited her to add a pebble to a pile, a symbolic act which he assured her would bring her luck and make her dreams come true.

Perhaps it was the wrong sort of pebble, or perhaps the Queen placed it upside down, but the act cast a momentary evil spell on the proceedings as a mysterious all-pervading whiff of raw sewage briefly passed across the sunlit scene.

Last year the Queen, who once restricted her autograph to state documents, signed a Manchester United football; yesterday she signed the inside of a glazed clay roof tile. It is to be placed atop the monastery, part of which is the oldest wooden structure in Korea.

By the time she left the monastery, the Queen had collected birthday gifts of lucky leather pouches, a jewelled leather traditional crown, a basket of fruit, a green vase, a scroll of calligraphy and a wooden mask from the play.

The Duke of Edinburgh, whose private birthday gift remains unknown, missed the earlier part of his wife's day. He travelled north of Seoul to the demilitarised zone at Panmunjom, where the ceasefire to end the Korean war was signed in 1953.

As he surveyed the landscape, loudspeakers in the distance blared rousing totalitarian marching music. Not a patch on the super soprano from Yorkshire.


The Queen and a Hahoe village dancer, also celebrating his birthday, drink a toast of rice wine from gold cups

A world away from Windsor

By Tim Reid

A SOUTH KOREAN hamlet is not the strangest place the Queen has celebrated a birthday. In 1970 she found herself being toasted by villagers on a tiny island in the Coral Sea.

That birthday, her 44th, fell during a five-week Australian tour and was one of several far livelier and more exotic affairs than her favoured method of celebration — a family dinner at Windsor Castle. Perhaps her most unforgettable foreign birthday was the one she spent in Cape Town in 1947 on her first official overseas visit.

The young Princess was in South Africa with her father, George VI, during a tour to thank the Commonwealth for its war effort. In a memorable broadcast from Cape Town, on her 21st birthday, she dedicated her life to the service of her people.

Three years later, accompanied by her husband, Princess Elizabeth marked her 24th birthday by watching him score the first goal in a polo match in Valletta, Malta. Maltese flags and Union Jacks decorated the streets, and hundreds of bouquets were sent to the birthday girl from British warships and villagers on the island.

But in 1970, on the Australian coral Green Island, the Duke of Edinburgh raised a few eyebrows when he told a persistent photographer that he had been running around "like a blue-arsed fly". It did not dampen things too much. The Queen was still greeted by a chorus of *Happy Birthday* from reporters.

TODAY IN SECTION 2

Brian Keenan reviews In The Cellar, the story of a hostage, Roy Jenkins on Dean Acheson, plus Erica Wagner (right) on Andrew Greig's When They Lay Bare
Books, pages 42, 43



Airlines fear tourist revolt as delays rise

Air controllers blamed for runway chaos, report Giles Tremlett and Arthur Leathley

AIRLINES yesterday issued a warning of "chaos and catastrophe" across Europe this summer as they accused the international air traffic control service of causing huge delays.

Carriers including British Airways fear a wave of airport protests similar to those already seen in Spain, where passengers have refused to leave aircraft and even threatened to kidnap a pilot.

Delays to flights are at their worst and airlines predict that hold-ups this year will easily exceed those of the 1980s, when millions of passengers were stranded at airports.

Controllers claim that, because equipment in several countries is so decrepit, delays are the only way to maintain acceptable safety levels.

The first signs of the crisis emerged as one of Europe's biggest airlines, the Spanish carrier Iberia, announced that it was cancelling 16,000 flights to avoid huge delays in coming months.

The airline called on other carriers, including British charter firms taking more than five million tourists abroad, to boycott Spanish airspace because of the air traffic control problems.

it appeared yesterday, however, that airlines would stick to their flight plans, risking routine delays of three hours or more. Figures for the beginning of this year show a 44 per cent rise in the number of scheduled aircraft delayed by more than 15 minutes, with almost one in four flights held up in January.

The problems in dealing with record numbers of flights have reached crisis proportions, according to airlines that have experienced the biggest delays.

The Association of European Airlines, which represents 27 major airlines, including British Airways and British Midland, will tomorrow launch its own offensive to cut delays. It will demand that the central air traffic control service, based in Brussels, forces poor performers into line.

A meeting of Eurocontrol, the international air traffic control organisation based in Brussels, will be told that the service is inefficient, with some radar equipment almost 30 years old. Airlines will demand that Eurocontrol takes on more powers to enforce improvements.

Karl-Heinz Neumeister, secretary general of the Association of European Airlines, said: "We will have catastrophe on the sun belt to the Mediterranean this summer. Already we are seeing a huge increased in delays and air traffic control services are nowhere near their targets for reducing delays."

Delays are expected to be exacerbated by the decision to close air space over Italy to accommodate Nato forces involved in the Kosovo conflict. Some of the most important air traffic control services in Europe, in Geneva, Zurich, Marseilles and Padua, Italy, are causing the worst delays.

Iberia said it would suspend 77 flights a day, or almost six per cent of its daily total. The move came after a number of airport rebellions by furious passengers on delayed flights.

In one rebellion, passengers called airport police and denounced the pilot for "kidnapping" after three hours on a runway. The Civil Guard had to board the aircraft after they threatened to lynch the pilot.

ERIC WELLER



Cherie Blair, right, renews her acquaintance with Celia Larkin, Ireland's first lady, at the Women's Irish Network lunch at the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park Hotel in London

NEWS IN BRIEF

Urgent Bill to shield IRA killers

Parliament is to rush through a Bill to make it impossible for courts to hear evidence obtained during the recovery of bodies of people murdered and buried by the IRA in the 1970s.

The Bill, to be introduced as early as tomorrow, will also establish an independent commission to act as an intermediary between the IRA and the authorities. It will not offer amnesties to those responsible for the killings.

Last month the IRA said that it had found the unmarked graves of nine of the "disappeared", but insisted on having the legislation passed before revealing their locations.

Chefs' GM ban

The television chefs Antonio Carluccio and Rose Gray joined other top chefs to launch a campaign against genetically modified food. They will display a logo on their restaurant windows and menus showing that they are avoiding GM produce in their cooking. The Greenpeace campaign may be extended to food served at airports, on trains and in schools.

Law chief order

John Morris, the Attorney-General, has been ordered to disclose details of the secret consultations preceding the appointment of Philip Sales as First Treasury Counsel. Mr Morris was given until April 30 by an employment tribunal, which is to hear a *sex bias* case, to reveal the "secret soundings" with the Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice and Master of the Rolls.

Babies hobbled

Many babies are not learning to crawl and walk properly because they spend too many hours buckled into *push-chairs*, rockers or car seats, a University of Michigan study has found. Researchers said that children who had not been allowed enough time to practise crawling and kicking showed poor balance and co-ordination and were fatter than others.

Presenter dies

The woman whose voice was known to millions through the phrase "Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin", has died. Eileen Mitchell, who presented *Listen with Mother*, also sang many of the nursery rhymes in the programme on which she appeared for about 15 years. Mrs Mitchell died aged 76 at Sevenoaks Hospital, Kent, after a long battle with cancer.

Art prize shortlist

In the youngest shortlist for the NatWest Art Prize, Britain's largest art award, the 11 artists have an average age of just 32. More than 600 entries, the biggest field so far, were submitted for the award, which aims to foster technical skills. The winner, to be announced on June 15, receives £26,000 and the other finalists each take £1,000. Full details, *Metro*, Saturday

Lawrences sue five suspects for damages

By Michael Harvey and Stewart Tendler

THE parents of Stephen Lawrence launched a civil action for damages yesterday against the five men suspected of killing their son.

For the first time all five men could face detailed cross-examination under oath before a jury about their involvement in the murder six years ago at a bus stop in Eltham, southeast London.

A civil action means that any evidence would be tested by a lower burden of proof than in a criminal case.

Doreen and Neville Lawrence also issued writs in the High Court in London against the Metropolitan Police and Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner, seeking compensation over the force's failed investigation of the killing.

The writs were issued the day before the sixth anniversary of Stephen's death and just within the time limit for launching civil actions.

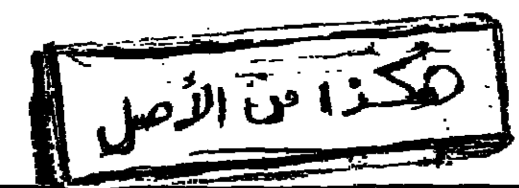
The family's solicitor, Imran Khan, said: "I can confirm on behalf of Mr and Mrs Lawrence that I have today issued protective writs in the High Court against certain individuals considered to be responsible for the murder of Stephen Lawrence.This is for damages arising out of and in consequence of the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

"I can also confirm that I have today issued a protective writ on behalf of Mr and Mrs Lawrence against the Metropolitan Police. The writ is for damages arising out of the failed investigation into the murder."

The writs have legal precedents. In 1991 the relatives of Lynn Siddons, 16, murdered in Derby in 1978, successfully sued Michael Brookes over the murder. The court awarded the family £10,000 and he was later convicted of killing the girl.

Three of the suspects in the Lawrence case — Neil Acourt, Luke Knight and Gary Dobson — were formally acquitted of the murder of Stephen three years ago when a private prosecution brought by the family collapsed.Under current law they cannot face further criminal charges for the murder. The case against Jamie Acourt and David Norris was dropped before it reached court. In theory they could still be tried.

Last night lawyers for the suspects said they had not received official notification.



Relatives stormed a ward to resuscitate this boy. Doctors say he should be left to die

Court asked to rule on parent's right to demand life-saving care, reports **Michael Horsnell**

RELATIVES of a profoundly disabled boy became involved in a violent dispute on a children's hospital ward when told that he should be allowed to die, a court was told yesterday. Doctors and police were injured in the fracas as the family tried to resuscitate him.

Carol Glass, 38, had been informed that her 12-year-old son, David, was dying and that "nature should be allowed to take its course" without medical intervention. She and about a dozen members of her family had gone to St Mary's Hospital in Portsmouth after learning that, against her wishes, doctors had been instructed by the chief executive of the Portsmouth NHS Trust to give David diamorphine, the heroin-based painkiller that can hasten death.

Their efforts to resuscitate David during the altercation "prevented him from dying", according to a statement from Mark Ashton, a consultant paediatrician. He said that in normal circumstances staff would have recommended that the family hold the child and calm him while he was allowed to die peacefully.

Instead, the family had pulled David from his bed to stimulate his breathing.



Carol Glass: concerned about future treatment

"Members of his family started blowing raspberries in his ears, banging his chest, and rubbing his arms and legs very vigorously despite being asked not to," Dr Ashton said. "In my view this was extremely cruel. He should have been allowed to pass away peacefully and with dignity. It was not in his best interests simply to keep him alive."

However, Mr Justice Scott Baker was told in the High Court that far from dying, the boy survived and now plays with his sisters at home, laughs, smiles, responds to voices and light, and enjoys days out with his family.

Mrs Glass, from Portsmouth, who has three other children, has accused the trust of unlawfully acting contrary to her wishes. She is seeking a legal declaration to ensure that her son will be entitled to resuscitation and life-saving treatment if he needs to be readmitted to hospital.

Richard Gordon, QC, for Mrs Glass, told the judge: "Clinicians at the trust came to the view as long ago as last July that it was in the child's best interests not to take active steps to keep him alive. The thrust of that view was that any life-saving treatment should be withheld and he should be allowed to die."

Two weeks ago a representative of the Official Solicitor, who is representing the boy in the case, visited him at his home. "We met David in his bedroom, sitting on the lap of one of his sisters," the court was told in a statement on behalf of the Official Solicitor. "We said, 'Hello.' His eyes were wide open and it was noticeable his head turned to the sound of voices."

David was born with hydrocephalus — water on the brain — which left him with blindness, spastic quadriplegia and severe learning difficulties. His mother describes his health as good and says he can eat and drink without a nasal tube. He has been admitted several times to St Mary's throughout his life but is now being cared for at home with the help of community services.



David Glass, while profoundly disabled, is said to play with his sisters, laugh, smile, respond to voices and enjoy days out with his family

Mr Gordon said that he was readmitted last July to a local hospital under the trust because of breathing difficulties and spent 23 days on artificial ventilation before he was fit enough to be discharged. There had been subsequent readmissions and during one of these the question had been raised about whether resuscitation should be provided. Mrs Glass had insisted that it should.

The fracas with the boy's family — the subject of a separate criminal case — had occurred in October, the day after staff had been instructed to prescribe diamorphine.

Mr Gordon said that because of the breakdown between the family and St Mary's Hospital, David would not be treated by Portsmouth NHS Trust again, but at a hospital in Southampton.

He emphasised that whatever the outcome of the case, it was "not an attempt to blame the doctors". Neither was it an attempt by Mrs Glass to "dictate to the clinicians whether and what treatment should be given to her son", or an attack on clinical judgment.

The object of the proceedings was "to ensure that the events that occurred in October cannot happen again whenever or wherever the child is to be treated". He said that Mrs Glass had a legitimate concern about what would happen if a similar situation arose in another hospital and that the problem should be sorted out before it did.

Mr Gordon told the judge that in all cases in which doctors sought to withdraw treatment and allow a child to die without the consent of parents, hospitals should be required to seek the approval of the courts and continue to give emergency treatment until such approval had been obtained.

Andrew Hockton, appearing for the Official Solicitor, told the court: "Our concern is that the applicant [Mrs Glass] appears to be trying to impose some kind of legal and procedural strait-jacket on an area of the law that has been left, for good reason in many cases, uncertain."

The hearing continues.

Teenager roused from coma by rugby triumph

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES
SOUTH WEST CORRESPONDENT

A TEENAGE rugby player who had been in a coma for six months reached out and grabbed a trophy that his team-mates brought to his hospital bedside.

Tom Bendall, 19, had shown little progress since being injured in a hit-and-run road accident, but when three friends showed him the cup that his team had won, the front-row forward raised his arms for the first time and took hold of the handle.

His parents, Haydn and Pam Bendall from Lydney, Gloucestershire, said that his condition had since improved greatly. "It was wonderful to see him finally starting to react to things. He grabbed hold of it well and I reckon he could have lifted it up on his own," Mrs Bendall said.

Her son's neck was broken in the accident last October. He spent three weeks at Frenchay Hospital in Bristol before being transferred to Gloucester Royal Hospital. Although he opened his eyes a week later, he had been motionless and unresponsive since, and doctors said that he could take years to recover.

Last week Lydney Colts, the under-19s side he played for, won the Gloucestershire County Cup by beating Cheltenham Colts 13-12. The following day, Mr Bendall's team-mates Mark Kiely, John Lewis and Lee Johnson took the cup with them on their weekly visit.

Mr Kiely, 19, said that he was speechless when his bedridden friend grabbed the cup. "Before the game we said we would win it for Tom because he was one of the main players in the team," he said. "It just shows how much his rugby meant to him."

Joe Willison, the manager of the hospital's head injury unit, said: "It's a gradual stage-by-stage process, but he is making good progress."

The scorpions in new Labour's bottle

Philip Webster on a biography which shows how Mandelson's feud with Brown left Blair despairing

TONY BLAIR questioned the long-established assumption that he would one day serve under Gordon Brown several months before the death of John Smith in May 1994, it emerged last night.

In his book *Mandelson: The Biography*, published yesterday, Donald Macintyre writes of a Sunday morning walk in the park by Mr Blair and Mr Mandelson around the turn of 1994 which would take on unexpected significance a few months later after the sudden death of Mr Smith.

He says: "For the first time Mandelson was left with the impression that Blair was hinting that the trio's unwritten assumption of Brown's primacy could not be taken for granted. It was almost as if he was putting down a marker with *the man who, it was still widely assumed, would be Brown's* principal campaign strategist if and when the moment came."

The still-disputed role played by Mr Mandelson in the leadership election later that year led to the rift in his long friendship with Mr Brown, whose friends have never been convinced that Mr Mandelson was not pushing Mr Blair's cause with the press while privately trying to stay in both camps.

The disclosure of Mr Blair's *apparent decision not to defer* to Mr Brown is yet another *twist in the story of the complicated* relationship of the three men who founded new Labour.

The events were to lead to the "titanic feud" — as Mr

Fears over Mandelson and Brown

Blair aims to heal top aides' rift

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

The *Times* headline of May 11, 1996 that angered Blair

Blair put it in a letter to Mr Mandelson — between Mr Brown and Mr Mandelson in 1996 that the Labour leader feared could hit their election *chances. It was ultimately* blamed for the disclosure before Christmas last year of Mr Mandelson's £373,000 loan from Geoffrey Robinson, which resulted in both of them leaving the Government.

The Mandelson biography tells graphically of the "despair" caused to Mr Blair by the battle between his friends. But it reveals that he warned Mr Mandelson that if the "Greek tragedy" went on he would allow him to carry out his apparent threat to resign as Labour's election manager *and as a member of the Blairite inner circle.*

On Thursday May 9, 1996, the book reveals, Mr Mandelson walked out of a strategy meeting after another policy disagreement with Mr Brown in which he felt Mr Blair had sided against him. As he went off for a weekend in Prague Mr Mandelson wrote to Mr *Blair saying that he was sorry the meeting* ended as it had but "I think you and I have reached the end of the road".

The last straw for Mr Blair was a lead story in *The Times on Saturday, May 11 telling of* his efforts to heal a rift between Mr Mandelson and Mr Brown. It led Mr Blair's team to think that Mr Mandelson was the prime source.

In fact the story had been prepared over the previous ten days, but Mr Blair was not to know that.

Angry and upset, he wrote to Mr Mandelson *saying that* he and Mr Brown seemed "*more desirous of victory over* each other than of trying to *make it work*". He added: "We are not players in some Greek tragedy . . . Have you any conception of how despairing it is *for me* when the two people that have been closest to me for more than a decade, and who in their different ways are the most brilliant minds of their generation, will not lay aside personal animosity and help me win."

Mr Blair is reported as repeating: "Why, oh why can't my two best people get on with each other?"

But when Mr Mandelson wrote back to Mr Blair he quoted Michael Wills, a friend of *both him* and Brown, as saying Mr Brown was "deter*mined to kill me before I de*stroy him".

Mr Wills was reported as telling a friend that the two politicians were "like scorpions in a bottle; only one of them will crawl out alive".

WAR INSTEAD OF PEACE

Peter Mandelson prepared the ground for a Labour government under Tony Blair to go to war when he helped to draft the new Clause 4, the biography discloses. In March 1995, soon after Mr Blair's announcement that he was scrapping the old Clause 4, Mr Mandelson toughened up the document that was to enshrine new Labour's values.

***A late draft that reached* Mr Mandelson committed Labour to the "peaceful resolution of conflict". Mr Mandelson scrawled in the margin for Mr Blair's benefit: "Won't a Blair government ever go to war?"**

Instead he proposed: "We are committed to the defence and security of the British people and to co-operating in European and international (*UN* and Commonwealth) institutions to *secure peace, freedom, democracy, economic security and environmental protection* for all peoples of the world." It was accepted almost verbatim.

ADAM BUTLER/AP



Peter Mandelson and Gordon Brown last year: two years earlier their feud had "threatened Labour's election chances"

'You are always part of the family'

TONY and Cherie Blair invited Peter Mandelson and his partner Reinaldo Avila da Silva to stay at Chequers on the night he resigned from the Cabinet over his loan from Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General.

In an insight into the Blairs' matter-of-fact attitude to Mr Mandelson's sexuality, the biography describes how Mrs Blair telephoned him from Chequers shortly after he had announced his departure from government to say that he would "always be part of the family".

She asked him where he was going to be later. He replied that he would be at *home. That would not do, she* said. "He must come down to *Chequers in the evening; her* children would be there, along with her mother Gale. It would be a family occasion." Mr Blair then came on *the line. "We want you to be* with us." And of course he should bring with him Avila.

The book records: "Which that evening, driving in a borrowed car up to Buckinghamshire, Mandelson did. They had a drink, a family supper — with Mandelson, but not Blair, breaking off to watch his resignation interviews on the television news — stayed the night and returned to London around noon."

Mr Blair had already written out for Mr Mandelson advice on his career. In it he included rebuilding a base in *the party, selling the house* that had caused him all the trouble, and being open about his relationship.

Other disclosures include:

☐ Quite apart from loaning him the money, Mr Robinson helped Mr Mandelson to find his property. "Together, driven by Robinson's chauffeur, they set out househunting . . . they found the narrow, four-storey Georgian house in Northumberland Place . . . Mandelson had found a London home he wholeheartedly liked."

☐ Although Mr Mandelson *has played down his member*ship of the Young Communist League, the book says that he was active in it from February 1971 to September 1972, regularly selling the *Morning Star*. A friend at the time says "you learn how to manipulate and be Machiavellian".

☐ As a young man he acknowledged that he was a "bougeois at heart". Writing to a friend in 1973 from a mission in Tanzania he said: "At times I have felt that I am losing a socialist grip on myself . . . don't let this frankness go beyond *your eyes*."

Dear Tony...

Peter Mandelson's letter to Tony Blair of May 9, 1996 after he "went nuclear" over slights from Gordon Brown:

"I am very sorry that your meeting ended as it did, but I think we have to recognise that you and I have reached the end of the road. I am more than willing to carry on the general election planning if you wish — although we'll *reach the same brick wall* on that too, eventually — and I will be very sorry not to play my day-to-day role here in Millbank . . . I hope you don't think that *amour propre* is the root of my problem. I have long gone beyond that. But I felt greatly let down by you this morning, and embarrassed. I do not want to be in that position again. Needless to say, I will always be available *to you in any circumstance* to help and advise. Operationally, though, I think we have reached the glass ceiling."

Love as ever, Peter

Mr Blair replied that Brown and Mandelson seemed "more desirous of victory over each other than of trying to make it work". He could not tolerate walkouts or, effectively accusing Mr Mandelson, "*irresponsible*" *stories* in *The Times*. "We are not players in some Greek tragedy. We have one overriding responsibility to deliver an election victory, and though it might seem pious, it is just not fair to all those people who really want such a victory and are working for it, to be casualities of some titanic but ultimately irrelevant personality feud . . . Have you any conception of how despairing it is for me when the two people who have been closest to me for more than a decade, and who in different ways are the most brilliant minds of their generation will not lay aside personal animosity and help me win?"

Dewar eyes a full house

Labour's Scottish leader in waiting is on a winning streak — with bingo-goers, writes **Jason Allardyce**

THE Secretary of State for Scotland looks as if he has just committed a most terrible deed. Donald Dewar is ashen-faced and his big hands are covered in a blood-red liquid — but he has something more serious than murder in mind.

Armed with a felt pen which is running all over the place, the man most likely to emerge as leader of Scotland's first parliament in 300 years is lost in a game of bingo in one of Glasgow's most deprived communities. Bingo is the new religion in Possilpark, where neon-lit, licensed hangars attract a following bigger than any local churches can hope for.

Mr Dewar is just one number short of a full house and the prospect of winning £100. Of course, the Scottish Labour leader would be far too much of a gentleman to take the money in a community blighted by drugs, high unemployment and poverty. He is here to demonstrate to ordinary Scots that his "conversation with Scotland", as the Labour Party has dubbed his presidential-style 2,000-mile campaign around the country, is as relevant to a working-class audience as it is to the middle-income voters who propelled the party to power in 1997.

Donald Dewar is a rather awkward premier-in-waiting. He does not normally go in for media stunts like yesterday's, which also involved him calling the bingo numbers, with a little help from Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary. Until a few months ago, he even resisted the efforts of Labour imagemakers to convince him that his 20-year-old overcoat had to go, that his heavy, horn-rimmed glasses should be replaced and that crisp shirts and snappy ties must become de rigeur.

As Scottish Secretary of State after the general election, he was even uneasy about the notion of being driven around by someone else in a government Rover — he only grudgingly accepted that it was part of the job.

Yesterday, on "Donald Dewar's Holyrood Express", Labour's Scottish battlebus, he still wasn't wearing a belt, and over lunch he insisted on picking at a plate of chips with his fingers. He may be two weeks away from governing Scotland but Donald Dewar is still Donald Dewar. While such characteristics make this man of the stilted soundbite appear rather odd, they also make him enormously popular, and have led him to be dubbed father of the Scottish nation.

At the bingo in Possil, a better focus group than most of those which preoccupy the Labour Party, it was Mr Dewar's peculiar and sombre calling — "Three-seven, thirty seven: very sinister" — which drew the biggest cheers from the audience of 400 people. As he prepares for power, Mr Dewar, who is variously dubbed "The Gannet" on account of his voracious appetite and "The Stork" on account of his gangly appearance, is clearly beginning to enjoy a campaign that is going his way.

Donald Dewar allows himself a smile. "I really do think it's coming our way," he says, "and it's a happy campaign for that reason."

Letters, page 25



TOM FINNIE

Donald Dewar, Mo Mowlam and local candidate Patricia Ferguson in Possil

English exiles who are backing SNP

By Gillian Harris, Scotland Correspondent

THIRTEEN years after she moved from the East End of London to the North East of Scotland, Dot Jessiman met a politician at a party who asked her if she had ever considered joining the SNP.

When she pointed out that she was English, he laughed and replied: "What's that got to do with anything?"

Mrs Jessiman says it was that conversation with the late Allan Macartney, the Scottish National Party's former deputy leader, which convinced her to sign up. She now heads New Scots for Independence, a group whose 500 members are not Scottish but back SNP policies, including independence. The overwhelming majority are English but some are from France, Ghana, Germany, India and Belgium.

The devotion of the growing band of Englishmen and women to the SNP has caused surprise in some quarters. After all they are effectively voting to turn a part of the United Kingdom into a foreign country. But the activists accept that if Scotland votes for independence, they will be foreigners in the place they call home. "That doesn't bother me at all," said David Ashby, 46, a recent SNP recruit from Swindon in Wiltshire. "I cross a border when I go to France on holiday. Why should it bother me to cross a border back into England?"

> ‘Why should it bother me to cross a border into England?’

Mr Ashby and his wife Carole moved to Cumbernauld 16 years ago. They joined the party this month after meeting their SNP candidate, Andrew Wilson, who introduced them to Alex Salmond, SNP leader. "We asked ourselves what party would really represent the country and came to the conclusion it was the SNP," Mr Ashby, who works in an electrical engineering firm, said.

"We are not placard-waving activists but it is frightening how ignorant people in England are about what is going on in Scotland. People down south do not seem to realise that Scotland is already a separate country and for people in England to turn around and say Scotland needs England, when it does not, is just ridiculous." They insist that they have never experienced anti-English racism. "The only racism was in London when I tried to pay for something with a Scottish pound note and got some snide remark about Jocks," Mr Ashby said.

He wants to become involved in the fight for seats in the Holyrood parliament. "It is all very well sitting around moaning and groaning but this is a chance to change things and I think we have a duty to do what we can."

Mrs Jessiman, 63, who has lived with her husband in Aberdeenshire since 1975, believes that a record number of English people in Scotland will vote SNP on May 6. "Once they come here they can see the injustice of being dictated to from Westminster, they remember experiments carried out in Scotland like the poll tax and they want to change all that," she said. Mrs Jessiman, who is standing as an SNP list candidate in North East Scotland, was a Labour supporter before she moved to Scotland. A former GLC housing officer, she left her family in Brent to live in a remote croft four miles from the nearest village. "The change could not have been greater," she said.



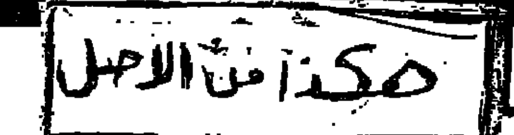
QUOTE of the day

Donald Dewar, the Scottish Labour leader, on almost winning a game of bingo in Glasgow

‘I was one number short of a full house.’

today's AGENDA

Gordon Brown will speak in Glasgow. The Tories will focus on tourism, while the SNP will discuss justice. Jim Wallace of the Lib Dems visits a healthy eating initiative for young mothers in Pilton, Edinburgh





'Gang tortured mentally ill girl to death'

Three teenage girls and two young men are accused of murder, reports Paul Wilkinson

A GANG of three teenage girls and two young men were said yesterday to have systematically tortured a "generous and vulnerable" teenager to death over six days.

At Easter last year Angela Pearce, 18, a schizophrenic, was lured to a flat to be robbed but the gang decided to keep her captive and subjected her to horrendous assaults. Eventually they agreed that she should not live to tell the tale, Leeds Crown Court was told.

She was suffocated with a belt and plastic bag and dumped in a cupboard. Her body was later buried in a shallow grave in a disused cemetery.

Malcolm Swift, QC, for the prosecution, said that at one stage her attackers, three girls aged 16, 17, and 19, and two men aged 17 and 21, turned up a hi-fi to drown her cries of pain while they laughed and joked.

They had beaten her with a steam iron and snooker cues. Her hair was burnt off and cigarettes were stubbed out on her body.

Claire Latif, now 20, her sister Meina, 18, Mark Francom, 22, Christopher Bevis, 18, and a 17-year-old girl identified only as "H" for legal reasons, deny murder between April 7 and 15 last year. The five, from Leeds, also deny false imprisonment and grievous bodily harm with intent. Claire Latif and "H" also deny robbery.

Mr Swift said that the gang lured Miss Pearce, who wore a pendant and rings and had £95 in her purse, to a tower block. "The females knew Angela was not normal and decided to take her to their flat to get her drunk and to abuse her. Each of the defendants played a part and their ferocity was such that each formed the view that Angela couldn't be allowed and wouldn't be allowed to leave alive," he said.

First her rings were forcibly removed. "'H' then got an electric iron and struck her in the face with considerable force," Mr Swift said. She was kicked and punched and one witness, who came and went to the house over the following days, described her eyes as swollen to the size of tennis balls. There was blood everywhere.

On Good Friday she pleaded for water but "H" instead gave her disinfectant. Mr Swift said: "Then 'H' picked up a snooker cue and swung it hard at Angela's head. Meina and 'H' stubbed out cigarettes on her face to the amusement of Claire and others."

On Easter Saturday the violence continued. "'H' amused herself by spraying hairspray over Angela's hair and setting fire to the spray in the nature of a flamethrower. Everyone laughed, so 'H' did it again," Mr Swift said. "Francom pulled Angela to her feet to punch her full in the face and she fell to the floor. He decided to urinate over her."

On Easter Sunday she was locked in the kitchen cupboard, where she was regularly beaten. The next day Meina cut off her hair and the following day 'H' put a plastic bag over her head and a belt round her neck and suffocated her.

On April 16 the two males buried the body in the old Mabgate Cemetery in Leeds.

The trial continues.


Angela Pearce: said to have been lured to flat by gang


PETER TREVNOR

Helen Golesworthy with a jungle nymph from Indonesia at the opening yesterday of London Zoo's new building

Zoo's web captures animal magic

By Nick Nuttall
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

LOCUSTS crawl over a battered jeep while near by butterflies fly free. Not far away, golden lion tamarin monkeys, tarantulas and anteaters roam in a replica rainforest to the sound of birds and rain. Elsewhere, upside-down jelly fish gently move through seawater.

This is the Web of Life, a series of 65 live-animal exhibits and London Zoo's first new building since the children's zoo opened four years ago. It has been designed to astonish the visitor with the complexity of nature and its myriad habitats.

Dr Jo Gipps, director of London Zoo, said yesterday at the launch: "All its animals have been chosen to highlight the variety of living organisms on Earth and the range of ecosystems they inhabit." The £4 million project is housed in a building inspired by antheaps. Termites sink boreholes to cool homes and the Web of Life centre has geothermal cooling from a borehole. Tall chimneys simulate those used by termites for ventilation.

Leading article, page 25

Old pews promote 'passive' worship

CHURCH pews can be "uncomfortable, rigid and unwelcoming" and remind worshippers of feudal society, according to a Church of Scotland report published today (Ruth Gledhill writes).

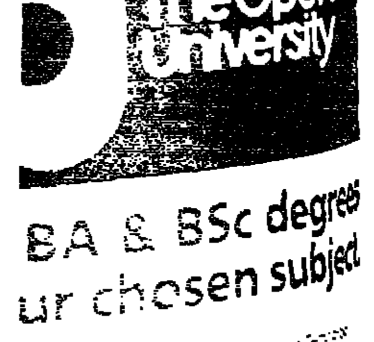
The pews can contribute to "passive" worship and, in some cases, should be removed entirely, the report says. "Many buildings were designed or adapted to conform to a pattern of church life and worship from which we have now largely moved on," it claims.

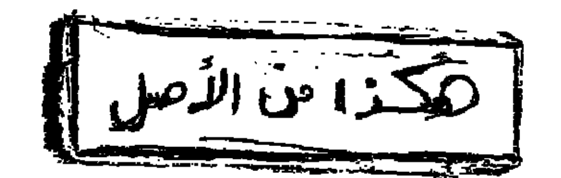
The report, by the church's committee on artistic matters, says that although pews can be historically and aesthetically appropriate, they are often no longer ideal for a "living church". While there might be a "cosiness" about sitting in a well-populated pew, in an empty church they can make people sit apart.

The report says that while pews should be removed from some churches, in others they are still appropriate.

The Rev Graham Leitch, minister of Barclay Church, Edinburgh, which has recently removed half of its pews as part of a £350,000 renovation, said: "It increases the flexibility of the space and has been enormously successful already. We have had a 95 per cent positive response."







Britain warns of Serb coup in Montenegro

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN yesterday gave a warning that President Milosevic was about to stage a coup in Montenegro, as confrontations between the Yugoslav Army and the Montenegrin police raised fears of an imminent showdown.

George Robertson, Defence Secretary, said Britain remained "vigilant and gravely concerned" about Mr Milosevic's intentions towards Montenegro. "We believe he may be about to undermine the position of Milo Djukanovic, the democratically elected President of that country."

After the killing of six Albanians inside Montenegro by Yugoslav troops — which Belgrade disputes — the Montenegrin Government demanded the punishment of those responsible. It also threatened to dismantle a military checkpoint blocking the border with Croatia after a Yugoslav Army incursion into the demilitarised Prevlaka peninsula on the Adriatic on Tuesday.

"The block will not last long because we will clear it." Dragisa Burzan, the deputy Prime Minister, said. He gave a warning that the army was trying to become a "parallel authority". "By doing this, they are increasing the possibility of conflict. I can say that we are close to the line."

The army yesterday blamed the killing of the refugees, including an old woman and a 13-year-old boy, on the Kosovo Liberation Army. But villagers said the Yugoslav Army was moving in to launch another assault on Kosovo.

Tensions rose higher yesterday after President Djukanovic rejected Belgrade's demand to put his loyalist police force under army command. Mr Burzan denounced the killing of the Kosovan refugees as a crime against humanity and called for the perpetrators to be tried for war crimes. The Pentagon confirmed that the army has begun to drive Albanian refugees who escaped from Kosovo out of villages in Montenegro.

Nato yesterday repeated its warning that it was determined to stop any extension of the conflict to other countries and Mr Robertson accused Mr Milosevic of trying to destabilise the Balkans. "There is a monstrous evil in our continent," he said before leaving for Washington. "The events in Kosovo have brought to light some of the worst, most depraved aspects of humanity, genocide, ethnic cleansing, rape and the virtual decapitation of Kosovo Albanian society."

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said on a satellite link from Skopje, Macedonia, that he believed that a ground war would be inevitable. Britain has repeatedly ruled out the use of ground troops, but said yesterday that more troops were being sent to Macedonia to be deployed as part of a peacekeeping force in Kosovo. Mr Robertson, underlining his careful choice of words, said only that the position on a "full-scale opposed invasion" remained as before.

The restless and resentful ally

MONTENEGRO was the smallest and poorest of the republics that made up the former Yugoslavia, and the only one to stay with Serbia when the others broke away in 1992 (Michael Binyon writes).

It has become increasingly restless at Belgrade's political and economic domination and resentful of the isolation caused by the sanctions on Yugoslavia. President Djukanovic came to power on an anti-Milosevic platform and a promise to conduct a more independent foreign and economic policy. Montenegro has separate trade agreements with Italy and Albania. In 1993 it dissociated itself, in effect, from the Serbian Orthodox Church.



A sixth the size of Serbia and with a population of 640,000, this land of spectacular mountains and lush valleys is ethnically divided between Serbs, Montenegrins and Albanians. Relations between them are tense.

In 1941 Italian troops occupied parts of Montenegro, but by late 1944 the Partisans, with British arms and equipment, controlled most of it. The Montenegrins were among the toughest of Tito's Partisans.

Since Nato's action began, Montenegro has taken in at least 70,000 Kosovan refugees, more per head of population than any of the surrounding countries. The Yugoslav 2nd Army has increasingly become Belgrade's instrument to enforce its will on the territory.

DARIO CARICATO



Three Apaches among a group of combat helicopters touching down in southern Italy en route to Albania yesterday.

First Apaches fly in to Albania

FROM SAM KILEY IN KRUME, NORTHERN ALBANIA

THE first American Apache "tank killer" helicopters arrived in Albania yesterday for a high-risk deployment in Kosovo that will test the resolve of Nato's leaders and the American public over the level of casualties they consider acceptable in the Balkans.

Intelligence sources have told *The Times* that the Apaches, armed with Hellfire missiles and heavy cannon, will be far more vulnerable to shoulder-launched missiles and anti-aircraft artillery than the high-flying jets that have led the air war so far.

"There are definitely going to be casualties. Pilots are going to get shot down in Kosovo," said one Western intelligence agent who has worked closely with the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Several intelligence agencies have reported to Nato that the ability of Slobodan Milosevic's air defences against jets to function properly has been badly eroded by airstrikes. But the missiles themselves remain intact. This will force the Apaches to fly low and fast through treacherous mountains and unpredictable weather on sorties against Serb units.

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, said in Albania on Monday: God forbid that pilots should be shot down, but in these conditions one has to be prepared to accept that some probably will be."

From the Serb perspective, however, the Apaches that arrived yesterday, the first of 48, are a major threat to infantry and armoured units which have taken to travelling by tractor and trailer, posing as refugees. Since the accidental bombing of a refugee column last week, Nato pilots have been reluctant to risk hitting more civilians. But the Apaches, which are equipped with night vision and other sophisticated features are less likely to be fooled by Serb camouflage.

The helicopters, which will be based a few minutes from the border, will also be able to react more quickly to KLA and Nato special forces calls for air strikes.

Famed troops to stand guard

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

SEVEN hundred paratroops from the famed US 82nd Airborne Division have arrived in Albania. Their task is to guard Apache anti-tank helicopters, the first of which finally arrived in Tirana last night, 17 days after Nato gave the go-ahead for their deployment.

The arrival of the paratroop battalion from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, was a surprise that emphasised the makeshift quality of the Nato buildup. They were chosen because help was needed in a hurry and the 82nd Airborne is a rapid-response unit.

The Apaches and their guards are expected to be based close to the Kosovo border at a military airfield near Lezhë. The paratroops could quickly find themselves in a fight if Serb forces cross the border to attack. If so, the Serbs will be up against a unit with a distinguished history that began in the First World War and continued through the D-Day landings.

Repeated delays in moving the Apaches from Germany to Albania have been blamed on rain, mud and overcrowding at Tirana airport. They were said to have infuriated General Wesley Clark, Nato's senior military commander, and others in the high command. Even now, it could be several days before the Apaches are ready to attack Serb tanks.

Captain Mark Arden, an Apache pilot who briefed reporters in Tirana, said that the helicopters would acquit themselves well, despite the threat of ground fire.

"The Serbs have been using their armour to great effect on woman and children in Kosovo," he said. "The tide is about to turn."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Refugee camp 'hit by Nato'

Majino Naselje: Four people were killed and 20 injured in a Serb refugee camp during Nato air raids, according to local police and witnesses. At least two devices were reported to have hit the camp, near Dakovica in Kosovo, which housed more than 200 Serb refugees who fled Croatia in 1995. The camp, formerly an agricultural centre, was hit at about 3am. A witness said: "Most of the people were sleeping. Everything happened in several seconds, nobody had time to escape." *(AFP)*

£13m for KLA

A first gift of more than £13 million has been promised to the Kosovo Liberation Army by Bujar Bukoshi, who controls the finances of the moderate Ibrahim Rugova's Kosovo Democratic League.

UN pessimism

Bangkok: Some Kosovan refugees may never return home, Brunson McKinley, head of the UN's International Organisation for Migration, said. Mr McKinley, in Thailand for a conference, likened their plight to that of the Kurds. *(Reuters)*

Navy build-up

Sebastopol: A missile cruiser led 30 Russian warships from this Ukrainian port for a ten-day exercise. Admiral Viktor Kravchenko, of the Russian Navy, said the exercises were not related to the Kosovo war. *(AP)*

Jets kill guard

Miami: Two F18 fighter jets from the aircraft carrier *USS John F. Kennedy*, on a Kosovo training mission off Puerto Rico, missed their target, killing a civilian guard and wounding four others who were directing the exercise.



TV soaps fall victim to 'flying circus'

FROM TOM WALKER IN BELGRADE

IT WAS an odd wake, the media gathering on the freshly mown grass as Goran Matic, frontman for the left in Yugoslavia, read the eulogy on the still-smoking and blackened skeleton behind him.

Reaching for descriptions to express this latest Nato outrage, he opted for a crowd pleaser: how else could you explain what was going on other than *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, he said.

Mr Matic, Minister without Portfolio, had just become minister without building. The hulk lying in the park beside the Sava and Danube rivers was none other than the Socialist Party headquarters of President Milosevic, struck by a Nato Tomahawk yesterday morning.

That was the eighth floor; above, on Floor 19, another missile had crashed into the offices of TV Pink and, further towards the heavens on Floor 23, yet another had scored a direct hit on Mr Milosevic's daughter's private radio and television station, Kosava.

If it was the dead parrot sketch to which the youthful Mr Matic referred, then this was definitely an ex-building. No longer would there be any mysterious Socialist cabals, such as those that brought Mr Milosevic to power; the former communist headquarters of Tito was hated by many; but nor would there be any more episodes of *The Simpsons* or the Brazilian soap opera *Esmerelda*, for which it was loved.

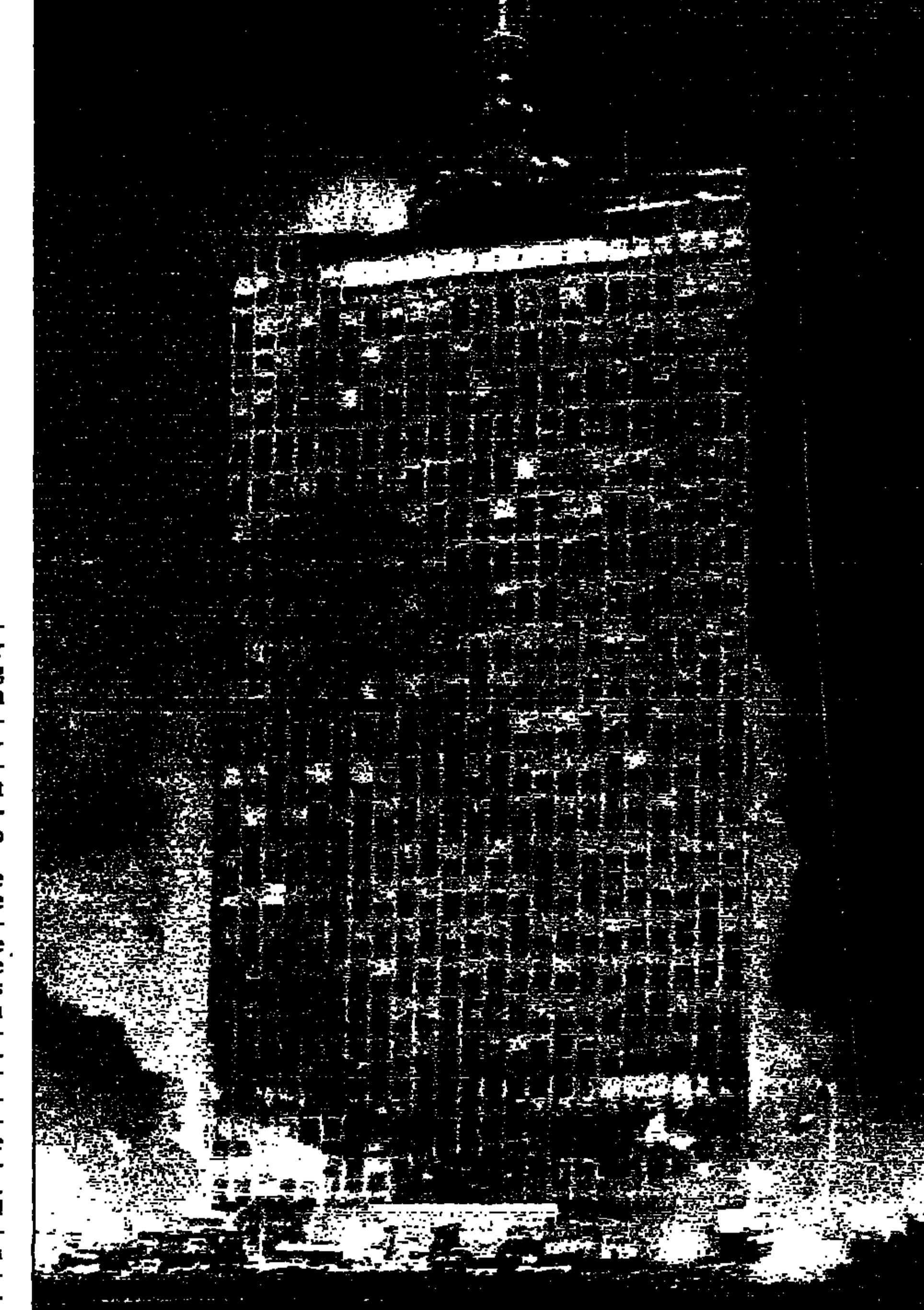
Even when hitting Mr Milosevic's party machine so directly, Nato had scored another own goal. "This building brought the people American movies and Western programmes," protested Mr Matic, who claimed four broadcasters were based in the tower. "It seems the freedom of the media is more dangerous to Nato than the military."

As usual after Nato's more spectacular strikes, there were confusing accounts of the damage. As the first pictures of the flames were broadcast on the few channels left, there was talk of 30 people having been trapped inside. Later Mr Matic made no mention of casualties, and it seemed the tower had probably been empty — this again leading to speculation that Nato gives advance warning of targets where "collateral damage" could be high.

Mr Milosevic was elected head of the then Serbian Communist Party at the tower in 1986, and his wife, Mira Markovic, has always been associated with TV Pink. Marija, their daughter, recently expanded Kosava's youth radio business into television. On other floors were many of the "export-import" businesses on which cronies of the regime grew fat.

Robert Nemeck, Pink's programme director, promised the station would return. Of *Esmerelda*, watched by 40 per cent of the nation, he said: "They never saw the final episode because of the bombs."

In the park, gardners began clearing away rubble and pieces of missile casing — the debris of Nato's flying circus.



Direct hit: the building containing Slobodan Milosovic's party headquarters

It's time Nato gave its rhetoric a reality check

INTERNATIONAL summits are invariably a time for evasion, euphemism and fudge. But Nato leaders, meeting in Washington this weekend for the alliance's 50th anniversary, owe their citizens candour. There is a worrying gap between rhetoric and reality.

To listen to the daily briefings, you would think that everything is going according to plan, bar a little bad weather. But that is obviously nonsense. The Nato military operation is fully justified, but it was started in a muddled and confused way. Leaders underestimated the Serbian determination to expel the Kosovar Albanians in the most horrible imaginable way and overestimated the impact of bombing on President Milosevic.

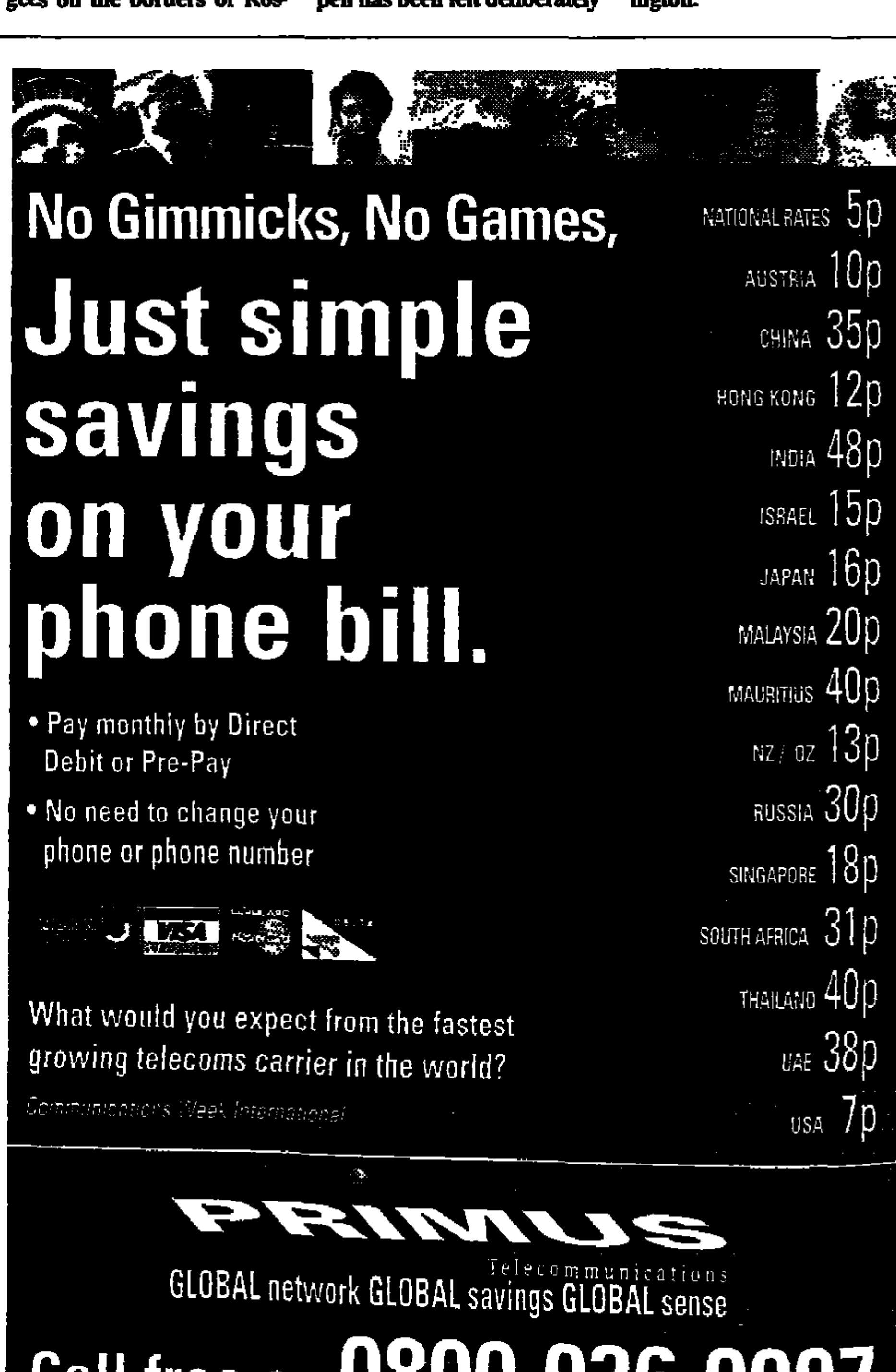
The air campaign has, admittedly, seriously damaged the military capability of Serbia. But it has failed to prevent "ethnic cleansing". Indeed, the plight of the refugees on the borders of Kosovo is now desperate. Means and ends are out of kilter.

That does not mean that the operation is wrong. Rather, Nato leaders should admit publicly what they are conceding in private, that a change of gear is now needed. The plan is clear: intensify air attacks (as is now happening) and prepare for the deployment of ground troops to permit the safe return of refugees.

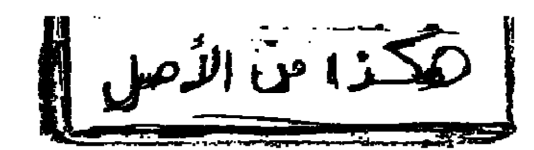
While Nato leaders agree that "the difficulties of a land-force invasion of Kosovo against an undegraded Serb military machine are formidable", this leaves open the option of deploying troops when such "degradation" has occurred, when the risk of heavy casualties has been reduced. When this might happen has been left deliberately vague, in part because of public opposition now. However, the issue has to be faced openly if the public is to be persuaded.

That needs to be coupled with a realistic statement of war aims. Denouncing President Milosevic as another Hitler achieves nothing except to solidify his support. Nato is not likely to agree a negotiated deal with him, and his regime will probably remain in power for some time, just as Saddam Hussein's has. It is no part of Nato war aims to oust him or to invade Serbia. So a Nato-run Kosovo will have to co-exist with an unfriendly, if not actively hostile, Serbia.

Kosovo has shown that Europe is still militarily dependent on the United States. Whatever happens within Kosovo itself, Europe needs even more urgently than before to improve its own capabilities. Frankness about both ends and means would be the best outcome in Washington.







PETER NICHOLLS



Paddy Ashdown talks to ethnic Albanian refugees during his visit to the Brazde camp in Macedonia yesterday

EU moves to throttle Serbia's fuel supply

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

THE European Union agreed yesterday on a move to choke off the fuel supplies that are flowing into Serbia.

The planned embargo, however, would remain voluntary for Serbia's neighbours and it would do little to stop deliveries through Montenegro.

The measure, to be made law by EU foreign ministers next week, will impose an embargo on all shipments of petroleum products from EU member states except supplies for humanitarian purposes.

Serbia's bigger neighbours, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, will then be put under diplomatic pressure to join the embargo. "As applicant members of the EU, they are required to join in our regulations," a spokesman for Germany, the present holder of the EU presidency, said.

The move was proposed by France as a legally acceptable way of cutting off the fuel imports that are still reaching Serbia. The United States and several other Nato members have been pushing for a full embargo that would be enforced by military means, including a naval blockade.

France, Italy, Greece and other Nato states are opposing a Nato embargo because no United Nations authority exists for such an action.

Washington says that an embargo is needed urgently to complement Nato's destruction of Serbian fuel stocks and its capacity to refine oil.

Nato says that it has already destroyed 70 per cent of Serbia's oil stocks and crippled all its refineries, and that the country's armed forces are suffering shortages. However, oil is still arriving by pipeline through Hungary and valuable refined products are entering in tanker lorries and by sea.

The main entry point of refined fuel supplies, much needed by the Serbian forces, is the port of Bar, on the Adriatic coast of Montenegro, according to Nato officials.

The supplies are being delivered by tankers owned by companies registered in Panama and elsewhere. An Athens-based company confirmed this week that it had delivered more than 9,000 tonnes of diesel fuel through two tanker deliveries to Bari in the past ten days.

The Americans acknowledge that big political obstacles lie in the path of enforcing a blockade. Searching and turning back tankers on the high seas could be considered a breach of international law and could strain relations with Nato allies and other states.

The other alternative, of bombing the docks at Bar, would risk further weakening Montenegro's fragile Government, which is struggling to stay neutral, even though, with Serbia, it is part of the Yugoslav Federation.

Hungary, which is a new member of Nato, said this week that it had "virtually halted" the flow of oil through its pipeline to Serbia; Bulgaria assured Nato yesterday that it would stop supplying the Belgrade authorities.

The EU is employing a carrot-and-stick approach to the region, offering immediate aid and promises of future moves towards European Union membership if the countries involved co-operate in the allies' campaign to halt Belgrade's offensive in Kosovo.

The EU ambassadors agreed on the European embargo in the face of initial objections from Greece and Italy.

The European Commission gave Hans van den Broek, its Commissioner for External Relations, authority to draw up the regulations without further formality once the foreign ministers had given the measure their approval.

Blair leads MPs over the top in 'language crawl'



MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

For the leader of a democracy the dynamics of humanitarian conflict are complex. "Mission creep" drags him forward just as "compassion fatigue" pushes him back. Then "attention drift" kicks in as the "boredom factor" descends.

And now comes a sideways vector. Yesterday at Prime Minister's Questions, "language crawl" emerged. Tony Blair snuck in a new word to describe when Nato might invade Kosovo.

Bit by bit the language changes. We have moved from a month ago when an impression was given that ground troops could occupy Kosovo only by agreement. Later, we learnt that tea and cakes were no longer a precondition: but entry must be unopposed.

By last week, the keywords had become "permissive environment" — a sort of benign trespass. Naturally (we were given to understand) one couldn't rule out the occasional lone Serb sniper but no serious battle could be contemplated.

Yesterday the terms changed again. The new word is "undegraded".

It was the Liberal Democrats' Alan Beith (standing in for Paddy Ashdown, escaped to the Balkans) who prised the new word from Mr Blair. Would he confirm, Beith asked, that attitudes to the use of ground troops had changed?

W-e-e-e-ll, implied Blair, troops could *not* go in, so long as the Serbs' military forces were "undegraded". MPs and journalists performed several quick mental flips-flops as negatives cancelled each other out. Does "we can*not* go in if they are *un*degraded" mean we *can* go in if they *are* degraded?

But the Serb machine has indeed been degraded, hasn't it? So we can occupy? There were mutters and mental whirrings as this sunk in. Just as the boredom factor threatened attention drift, while compassion fatigue grew, language crawl has accelerated mission creep ... all while Paddy was on politician flit! He'll be furious.

Still, Labour's Ben Bradshaw enjoyed it. Mr Bradshaw is Tony Blair's most warlike young fan. Every time Blair says a word like "bomb" Bradshaw nods his head in theatrical assent, like a back-window nodding-dog on overdrive. Let us hope the PM never says "bomb", "kill", "nuke", "*exterminate*" and "*zap*" in the same sentence, or Bradshaw's head would nod right off. Though the debonair and floppy-haired young Exeter MP has seen service in the trenches of the BBC studios at White City, it is not immediately clear that the mud and briar of the Albanian mountains would be his natural habitat. Gucci shoes slip in the snow.

Distracted by head-nod, mission-creep and language-crawl, I almost missed the other themes of the afternoon. First came the European Union beef-ban, raised by Dr Ian Gibson (Labour, Norwich North). This provoked the Prime Minister into trading insults with the Opposition as to who was to blame. Mr Blair's attack on the Tories received a more confident cheer from his back benches than his attacks on the Serbs. You know where you are with mad cow disease.

After BSE-rebuttal came deputy-bash. Blair and Hague bandied claims about which had the most useless second-in-command. Neither man's deputy (John Prescott or Peter Lilley) was visible. Hague said Blair's was slow-witted. (*Hon Members*: "Where is he?"): Blair said he'd rather have his than Hague's) (*Hon Members*: "Where is he?") whereupon Hague cried "He's there!" and Mr Lilley made a pantomime appearance from behind the Speaker's Chair (*Hon Members*: "Oooooh!"

I don't know what effect these MPs will have on the Serbs, but by God they terrify me.

BALKANS WAR: ALLIES' LOYALTY

Where Nato's members stand

BELGIUM

Government stance: Unlike Gulf War, from which Belgium distanced itself, the campaign is winning strong backing from centre-left coalition. More than 1,000 service personnel deployed, along with four F16 fighters. Tradition of support for humanitarian causes means much is made of refugees arriving since Sunday.
Public opinion: About 70 per cent favour air offensive; only 40 per cent back ground invasion.
Implications: No significant political parties are opposing the operation, but it is bound to become a factor in general elections on June 13.

CANADA

Government stance: Behind Nato and would back sending ground troops, but prefers continued bombing and favours using Apache helicopters. Has dozen CF18 jet fighters at Aviano with another six on way. About 650 military personnel in campaign.
Public opinion: Government support — about 71 per cent now back airstrikes — has risen steadily. Only 47 per cent favour sending ground troops. About 250,000 Serb-Canadians, plus as many of Slavic origin, are vociferously opposed.
Implications: May lose credentials as leading world peacemaker and internationally impartial.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Government stance: President Havel backs the airstrikes. Milos Zeman, the Prime Minister, praising the friendship between Czechs and Serbs, is sceptical, as is the Speaker, Vaclav Klaus.
Public opinion: Against military involvement in Kosovo — only about a third of Czechs support Nato action unambiguously.
Implications: Risk of an embarrassing exposure of the involvement of the Czech arms industry. Czech-manufactured anti-aircraft radar systems are apparently being used by the Yugoslavs. The Kosovo Liberation Army has also been buying from the Czechs.

DENMARK

Government stance: The Social Democrat-led Government has staunchly backed the air offensive, committing eight F16 fighters. Right-wing MPs unhappy that request to send submarine to Adriatic yet to be met.
Public opinion: Polls and letters to newspapers indicate solid support. In one poll, 65 per cent in favour of airstrikes and 46 per cent thought ground troops should be deployed.
Implications: Professional soldiers and right-wing parties think a government plan to cut defence spending by 2002 is now likely to be distinctly less stringent than had been proposed.

FRANCE

Government stance: Paris firmly behind Nato on airstrikes, with fighter jets playing an important role. Hubert Védrine, Foreign Minister, wants no change to present Kosovo stategy, but extreme right and the Communists are united against action.
Public opinion: Widespread support for ground intervention (64 per cent) amid growing doubts about effectiveness of airstrikes, still backed by 70 per cent.
Implications: Popularity of President Chirac and Lionel Jospin, Prime Minister, boosted, but fears of repercussions for Europe, and of provoking Russia.

GERMANY

Government stance: Germany committed to airstrikes, its first involvement in active combat since 1945. Fourteen Tornados in action, 3,000 troops are in Macedonia and a German frigate is in Adriatic. Ground troops will be used only to implement a peace deal.
Public opinion: Airstrikes supported by 64 per cent, with 30 per cent against. East Germans are most critical. Opinion still against, but shifting towards, Nato ground troop action — 33 per cent in favour, 55 against.
Implications: Medium-term risk that Green Party, seriously divided over airstrikes, will defect from Government, bringing it down.

GREECE

Government stance: Socialist Government of Ccstas Simitis has been adept at walking tightrope. Says morally obliged to help Nato but has ruled out contributing ground forces.
Public opinion: Opinion polls vary but all put anti-Nato bombardment figure at 92 to 97 per cent. Fuelled by Orthodox solidarity with Serbs and crafted Yugoslav TV images of burning cities and dismembered bodies. Anti-Americanism high.
Implications: Gloomy leaders fear a greater Albania and that northeast Turkish-speaking Muslim minority will seek autonomy.

HOLLAND

Government stance: A fervent Atlanticist, it yesterday called for an intensification of airstrikes. Jozias van Aartsen, Foreign Minister, said there were still many options open to Nato. but use of ground troops was not realistic.
Public opinion: About 78 per cent back Nato air raids and 68 per cent would support using ground troops, according to a recent poll.
Implications: MPs are concerned that the costly air campaign will overstretch an already strained defence budget. and that the country will not be able to accommodate thousands of Kosovo refugees.

HUNGARY

Government stance: A nervous Viktor Orban, Prime Minister, has cross-party support for airstrikes but with Nato bombs falling near border, pressure is growing to stay clear of action. No plans to contribute to military operations but air space available.
Public opinion: Decisively in favour of war — 60 per cent for, 31 against.
Implications: Long term, economy will suffer, investors avoiding a front-line state. Danube blockade and collapse of Yugoslav exports taking toll. Danger that Serbs turn on 300,000 Hungarian minority in Vojvodina region.

MAJORITY opinion in most of the countries belonging to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato) is behind the continuing airstrikes against Yugoslavia as leaders of the alliance gather in Washington to mark its fiftieth anniversary.

Support for sending in ground troops, however, lags behind. Both the British and French governments can count on a strong public endorsement of their hawkish stances.

In the US, acceptance of the need for ground forces is growing, but the leaders of nations in central and southern Europe face a harder task when it comes to persuading their citizens of the merits of taking such military action.

ICELAND

Government stance: Iceland's mainly conservative coalition Government fully endorses Nato's action. Iceland has no army. Political parties are preoccupied with imminent election; reaction to government line has been muted.
Public opinion: Before break-up of the Soviet Union and of the Warsaw Pact, Nato membership was widely seen as strategically necessary. Today many feel uneasy about supporting military action for the first time.
Implications: There may be calls for a rethink of Iceland's Nato membership, which used to be seen as a defensive coalition, useful to keep the Russians at bay.

ITALY

Government stance: Italy has played a pivotal role in the conflict, providing 11 air bases for Nato attacks. Massimo D'Alema's centre-left coalition includes an anti-war Communist faction; he has managed to combine loyalty to Nato with promises of a "swift end" to the bombing.
Public opinion: predominantly and increasingly anti-war; ranges from total opposition on far Left to concerns at proximity to conflict.
Implications: *Fears that Italy will have to take in more refugees and that south's shaky economy* will be hit. Fears of more instability among Balkan neighbours.

LUXEMBOURG

Government stance: This tiny Nato state has gone along behind the campaign without great enthusiasm from its Government, led by Jean-Claude Juncker, the centrist Prime Minister.
Public opinion: About 60 per cent of the public support the goals of the air offensive but there is little backing for a ground invasion.
Implications: The possibility of a prolonged war is worrying this *key EU financial centre and leading* federalist state, which is vulnerable to big movements in the European economy. A long conflict is also likely to further erode the euro's value.

NORWAY

Government stance: All parliamentary parties agree with the centrist minority Government's support for Nato action; Milosevic is regarded as an evil great enough to justify use of military force. Unhappy over information about bombed refugee convoy.
Public opinion: Kosovo ground action backed by 43 per cent, with 36 against, but military capability stretched by United Nations duties.
Implications: Nato has widespread support, but emphasis may be even more on UN solutions should the military campaign be unsuccessful.

POLAND

Government stance: The Polish Government is the most enthusiastic of the new Nato members from Central Europe about the alliance's action in the Balkans. It has sent 120 soldiers to Macedonia. There is no serious criticism from the ex-Communists. The Government would probably be ready to contribute to a ground force contingent.
Public opinion: Still backs the airstrikes though it dipped after Nato hit a refugee column.
Implications: In the long term, significant participation by Polish ground troops would have the effect of accelerating the modernisation of the Army.

PORTUGAL

Government stance: Portugal backs Nato's action and has put fighter planes at its disposal; unwilling to take part in ground offensive. Battalion will give humanitarian aid to refugees in Albania.
Public opinion: Two-thirds of those asked in a poll opposed a ground assault. Observers accuse Government of capitulating to US aims and note lack of concern in international community over the bloodshed in East Timor, a former Portuguese colony.
Implications: The conflict is far away, and is seen as having no direct impact on Portugal other than refugees possibly arriving.

SPAIN

Government stance: Under José María Aznar, Prime Minister, remains steadfast in backing for campaign. Leading opposition group, the Socialist Party, also expressing support, mainly because Javier Solana, Nato's Secretary-General, comes from its ranks.
Public opinion: Greater division, with 55 per cent backing Spanish involvement and 39 per cent against. Similar number say they would back a ground war.
Implications: Spain has no strategic interest of its own in the Balkans, but is increasingly keen on a strong Nato, which would protect it against any threat from North African countries.

TURKEY

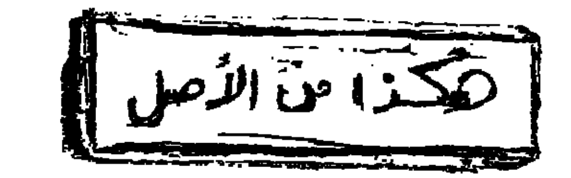
Government stance: Turkey, mindful of the Kurds, may have been chary of encouraging interference in ethnic problems, but more than rallied round when it saw the humanitarian disaster. Committed F16s and opened camps for many refugees. Will consider sending ground troops.
Public opinion: Kosovo's pain is deeply felt. Most of the victims are Muslim; some are ethnic Turks with relations in Turkey.
Implications: Greatest danger seen in a Nato climbdown. Turkey and Greece have long been sabre-rattling; no one takes the threat of their fighting entirely seriously.

UNITED KINGDOM

Government stance: Insists that to end war refugees must return, full security be enforced and monitored by international force, and Yugoslav Army and police units be withdrawn, giving access to aid agencies. Referendum to decide future. Sees little chance of Kosovo staying in Serbia.
Public opinion: Strongly supportive of action, with 2:1 majority backing airstrikes. Growing calls for use of ground troops, but significant minority inside and outside Parliament oppose war.
Implications: British forces may stay in Balkans for years; cost will bring calls for reverse of defence cuts, limiting other spending.

UNITED STATES

Government stance: Washington is demanding withdrawal of Serb forces from Kosovo, return of refugees and postwar autonomy for the province. Also planning for postwar rebuilding.
Public opinion: Polls show slightly more than 50 per cent of Americans now favour use of ground troops. Majority support the air campaign but are apprehensive about outcome.
Implications: Debate will be revived between isolationists, who question America's Nato membership, and internationalists, who support its role as world policeman.



Nuclear theft 'badly harmed US'

Ben Macintyre reports on a damning CIA assessment of Chinese spying

AMERICAN security was seriously damaged by the Chinese theft of designs for the most sophisticated nuclear warhead in the US armoury, according to a damning CIA report.

The report, which was widely leaked before its expected release yesterday, comes after a series of allegations that Chinese spies penetrated US nuclear weapons laboratories in the 1980s. It contradicts White House assertions that evidence of Chinese atomic espionage is inconclusive so far.

China has repeatedly denied the allegations of spying, but the CIA review team concluded that Chinese agents stole secret design data for the W88 warhead from the Los Alamos nuclear laboratory.

The W88 is an advanced miniaturised nuclear warhead launched from submarines and the report said that the theft from Los Alamos enabled China to develop its own version of the weapon, which allows multiple warheads to be attached to a single intercontinental ballistic missile.

In 1995, US intelligence first noted the sudden strides being made in China's warhead programme; investigations indicated that China had leapfrogged ahead in its weapons development using stolen US nuclear designs. The CIA report also investigated the implications of China's development of a missile with several warheads capable of striking multiple targets.

On his trip to America this month, Zhu Rongji, the Chinese Prime Minister, said Chinese scientists had developed the country's nuclear weapons programme without the help of stolen US information.

Congress and the Administration have launched a series of investigations into the espionage claims, focusing on why Wen Ho Lee, a Taiwan-born scientist removed from his post at the Los Alamos laboratory last month, was allowed to continue working at the laboratory long after he was suspected of providing China with information on the W88.

Mr Lee, who has not been charged, was made responsible for updating nuclear weapons sofware at the laboratory in the spring of 1997, several months after the FBI had begun the investigation in which he became the prime suspect.

Senate and House committees are also investigating whether the Administration was slow to respond. The theft was detected in 1995 and reported a year later to officials, including Sandy Berger, now National Security Adviser, but laboratory security was not improved until last year.

The White House has sought to downplay the allegations of Chinese espionage and last month President Clinton said that "the investigation has not yet determined for sure" that it occured."

In evidence given at a hearing on Chinese espionage last week, Notra Trulock, an Energy Department intelligence adviser, said that initially he had been prevented from telling Congress about his concerns; officials feared US-China relations might be damaged.

The CIA damage assessment concluded that, as well as stealing secret material, China had got information from other sources, such as academic communications between Chinese and US scientists in which information was passed inadvertently to Beijing.

Lost vote could be final blow for Yeltsin

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN suffered what could be a fatal political blow yesterday when Russia's Federation Council, the upper house of parliament, voted once again to reject the resignation of Yuri Skuratov, the Chief Prosecutor and a key player in a continuing sex and corruption scandal.

The surprise decision is in defiance of the wishes of Mr Yeltsin, who failed to get rid of Mr Skuratov in a similar vote last month. *Kommersant-daily* wrote yesterday that, if Mr Yeltsin failed to secure the support of the Federation Council, it would be tantamount to his impeachment. The council fell 29 votes short of the 90 votes needed to accept Mr Skuratov's resignation.

"This is a colossal political loss for the President and it will mean a political crisis whose consequences cannot be guessed at," said Andrei Piontovsky of the Centre for Strategic Studies.

Mr Skuratov, who has been investigating alleged bribe-taking by Kremlin officials, was suspended when charges of abuse of power were brought against him after the showing of video material showing him cavorting with prostitutes, but it is alleged that the prostitutes were provided by people wishing to avoid prosecution.

RICARDO FIGUEROA / AP



A policeman in riot gear stands guard near a smouldering barricade in Kingston in the wake of tax protests

Flights hit by rioting in Jamaica

MIAMI: TROOPS patrolled Jamaica's capital, Kingston, yesterday after protesters blocked streets and confronted police overa series of new government taxes to tackle the country's mounting debt and a banking collapse, writes David Adams .

The Foreign Office warned against all non-essential travel there as many businesses remained closed for a second day after rioting on Monday resulted in at least one death. British Airways and American Airlines suspended flights to the island .

Police say they opened fire on the rioters with teargas and warning shots, but deny firing into the crowds. At least six people suffered bullet wounds.

The protest was ignited by a hike in petrol prices — up to £1.25 a gallon from 97p — and a 30 per cent rise in vehicle licensing costs.

Space, the final frontier for rich tourists

FROM SUSAN BELL IN PARIS

PACK up your moon boots and head for the stars. According to the European Space Agency (ESA), holidaymakers may be able to take trips into space in the near future and stay in hotels orbiting the Earth. Even vacations on the moon should be feasible by the middle of the next century.

The announcement that space tourism could soon become a reality came as the first of two conferences devoted to the subject opened in Bremen, Germany. The four-day conference coincides with the release of an ESA study on the long-term prospects for space travel.

Geraldine Naja, who is in charge of European policy and perspective at the ESA, said she expected sub-orbital trips into space — lasting several hours and in which passengers would be able to experience a few minutes of weightlessness — to be available in as little as ten years.

"A space hotel featuring zero gravity amusement parks and swimming pools could be a reality by 2020 and would be ten times more fun than Space Mountain at EuroDisney," she said.

Building the space hotel should pose few problems as the necessary technology already exists. The trouble lies in how to get there. "The rockets we have at the moment are just too risky and expensive to make tourism viable," she said.

However, the ESA is confident that the necessary breakthroughs which will make space travel sufficiently safe and affordable will not be long in coming. It is difficult to estimate the cost of a trip into space, but sums of £50,000 for a one-hour flight have been mentioned. However, the ESA believes finding customers will not be a problem.

WORLD SUMMARY

King's visit heals rift with Syria

Jerusalem: An end to years of strained relations between Syria and its pro-Western neighbour, Jordan, was signalled when the new Jordanian ruler, King Abdullah II, received a warm welcome from President Assad during his first state visit to Damascus (Christopher Walker writes).

The trip follows the funeral of King Hussein two months ago, when the Syrian leader arrived unexpectedly on his first visit to Jordan in five years and spent over an hour in talks with the new King. Yesterday's visit opened the way to a new Jordanian-Syrian axis after years of animosity arising from many causes, including bitter Syrian opposition to Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

Sources in Amman said Mr Assad was pleased by the late King's decision to replace his brother, Prince Hassan, as Crown Prince with Abdullah. Syria had accused Prince Hassan of backing the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood group which carried out bombings in the country in the 1980s.

Khmer Rouge trial set

A Khmer Rouge guerrilla commander is to be put on trial for the murder of Mark Slater, a British backpacker from Corby, Northamptonshire; a Frenchman and an Australian, who were snatched from a train in Cambodia in 1994 (David Watts writes). No date for the trial of Nuon Paet has been set and investigations could take up to three months. The three men were bludgeoned to death.

'Meddling' in Games

Australia's representative on the International Olympic Committee, has strongly criticised America for interfering in the movement despite the IOC's house-cleaning (David Watts writes). Kevin Gospar said the American decision to deny tax-free status to US corporations' support of the Olympic movement would threaten money that had in the past been used to promote sport in less-developed countries.

Neo-Nazis burn hostel

Bonn: Four people were taken to hospital with smoke poisoning after neo-Nazis set a refugee hostel ablaze at Freiberg in Saxony, eastern Germany (Roger Boyes writes). The attack, on Tuesday, was probably intended to mark the 110th anniversary of Hitler's birthday on Tuesday. In the Austrian city of Graz, a Jewish cemetery was vandalised with swastikas. Some Jewish gravestones were also daubed in Germany.

Timor peace pact

Warring factions in East Timor signed a peace agreement which the Indonesian military vowed to enforce (David Watts writes). Leaders of the militias which have clashed over ties with Indonesia signed the pact at the home of Bishop Carlos Belo, the Nobel Peace Prize winner. The agreement does not specify disarmament. Today Indonesia and Portugal resume talks on the proposed autonomy pact for the territory.

Wild Amazon chase

Jakarta: Indonesian authorities will try to establish whether a tribe of cannibalistic women exists deep in the jungles of the remote province of Irian Jaya. Reports of the so-called Bok tribe have claimed that it consists of 20 big-bodied women who eat human flesh, roam naked in the Mamberano jungles, and kill the men after kidnapping them for mating. A previous official attempt to locate the tribe failed. (AFP)



Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on John Diamond and oral cancer; nappies that are kind to the environment; treatment for depression; the benefits of drinking sheep's milk; and progress in the treatment of leukaemia

Go green, throw a nappy on the compost heap



SUSANNA PRICE/BUBBLES

Babies in disposable nappies stay drier and can be changed quicker, but the used nappies create a major landfill problem. Now there is a biodegradable alternative

ARCHAEOLOGISTS excavating a landfill site in Sussex in 500 years' time will still be able to find traces of granddaughter Alice's misnamed "disposable" nappies. Every discarded nappy takes this long to break down as a result of the plastic in its outer cover. Nine million disposable nappies are used every day in the UK, more than three billion in a year. They are beginning to represent a considerable environmental problem.

The dilemma of nappies did not affect my generation. We had Harrington squares as the outer nappy and muslin as a lining. They were so expensive that there was no question of disposal. They were laundered and, crisp and white, used repeatedly. Disposable nappies are quicker to put on, keep the baby's skin much drier and therefore reduce the incidence of nappy rash and other skin troubles, but they are a landfill menace.

Enviro, an enterprising manufacturer from Luton in Bedfordshire, has set out to market nappies that keep the environmentalist happy but still spare the 98.5 per cent of new parents, who opt for the convenience of disposable nappies, hours of washing. Enviro produces the Weenee disposable nappy, which is compostable. It was awarded a bronze medal at the International Exhibition of Inventions in Geneva and sells readily in Australia and New Zealand, where there are tax incentives to encourage families to use recycled nappies (my children's old Harrington squares) or compostable disposable nappies, such as the Weenee, that contain no plastic.

All listeners of gardening programmes know the value of the compost heap. The latest ingredients to go with the grass clippings, weeds and degradable household rubbish are Weenee nappies.

The manufacturers suggest that dirty plastic-free nappies should be flushed down the lavatory, and that wet ones should go on the compost heap. The nappies can be bought with nappy bags that are also compostable and biodegradable.

● *Enviro (UK) Ltd, 3-7 Frederick Street, Luton, Bedfordshire LU2 7QW: 01582 484899.*

Living with cancer

Even though the tens of thousands of busy doctors listed in the *Medical Directory* need to choose their reading with care, the account of facing cancer of the tongue by John Diamond, *The Times* columnist, should still have an assured readership.

Diamond's book *C: Because Cowards Get Cancer Too* should be compulsory reading for doctors, not only because it highlights so many clinical lessons but because he wittily dissects the medical fraternity, their mannerisms and professional idiosyncrasies just as carefully as they dissected the tumour from the back of his tongue.

The book is brilliantly written, will fascinate and, despite the tragic subject, amuse and inspire both lay readers and the medical profession. Diamond has the ability to explain the complex aspects of his cancer in a way that makes it readily understandable.

Diamond developed a swelling in his neck that was attributed to glandular fever, infectious mononucleosis. The "gland" did not disappear but its continuing presence alarmed no one except Diamond. There is still the myth that glandular fever is a disease that waxes and wanes, despite research in Oxford which showed that there is scant evidence for this.

As weeks went by Diamond's glandular fever was relabelled "persistent glandular fever" and then "chronic glandular fever". It transpired that the lump was not a gland but a branchial cyst — a fairly rare condition, though not one to silence a medical meeting. When the cyst was aspirated, and cells were extracted, the pathologists found malignant cells. The tumour had already spread to the nearby lymphatic glands. Even so, it was many months before the primary site of the cancer, at the root of the tongue, was discovered.

Cancers of the tongue are included in the general term "oral cancer". Diamond's book, and his accounts of his cancer in *The Times*, have made compulsive reading and alerted the public, doctors and dentists to the need to be watchful. In the European Union as a whole, oral cancer is more common than cervical cancer, and any person in Britain is twice as likely to die from it as from a drink-driving accident. There are 900 deaths a year in this country from various oral cancers and 2,000 new cases are spotted annually.

A recent paper published by the Royal College of Surgeons shows that oral cancer is more common in the 20 to 40 age group than previously; cases occur even in the teenage years, and increasing numbers of women are being diagnosed. In general, however, it remains a disease of the older age groups, and 85 per cent of cases occur in the over-50s. When the cancer does develop in younger people, diagnosis is more likely to be delayed, and research has shown that the chances of a diagnosis being made while the tumour is still curable is, at best, rare under the age of 30.

The earlier an oral cancer is detected, the more likely the patient is to live and the less destructive surgery has to be. When the tongue is the primary site, as in Diamond's case, 26 per cent of tumours are, like his, in the posterior third of the tongue, 47 per cent around the edges, 9 per cent on the underside, 11.5 per cent at the tip and 6.5 per cent on the centre of the tongue. Cancer of the back of the tongue spreads to the tonsils and the soft palate and thereafter to the lymphatic glands in the neck at the angle of the jaw. Only in about 2 per cent of cases does the cancer travel to distant organs. The tumour is most common in smokers, particularly when associated with alcohol.

Early detection improves the survival rate from 50 to 80 per cent. With this in mind, a system of screening using a mouthwash dye containing toluidine blue, OraScreen, which is selectively taken up by cells that might be malignant, or pre-malignant, is employed. Dr Gerald Feaver, senior dental adviser to Marks & Spencer, with Terry Morrison and Dr Gerry Humphris, of Liverpool University, report in *Primary Dental Care* that screening with OraScreen is an acceptable and effective way of improving detection rates of the tumour. OraScreen has a 94 per cent sensitivity in detecting cancers of the mouth and even picks up lesions that do not look suspicious but which are malignant.

● C: Because Cowards Get Cancer Too *is published by Random House, £6.99*

Keep taking the pills

PEOPLE WHO are clinically depressed suffer from the misconception that their troubles are theirs alone. Speakers at a recent conference on the topic in London, organised by the National Depression Campaign, said a depressive shares strikingly similar symptoms at any one time with — and the campaign quotes a remarkably exact figure — 4,385,689 other Britons.

One woman in four and one man in ten suffers depression at some time or another and requires professional help. The good news is that 80 per cent are helped by treatment, as long as they continue to take the medication and their doctor continues to prescribe it for an appropriate length of time — usually six months.

At this conference the National Depression Campaign was dealing with the impact of depression on the patients' friends and family. The general view was that families are sometimes marginalised by medical and social services and are more likely to be seen as causes of the trouble than as agents who may help in the patient's recovery.

The overwhelming view of the lay public is that their relative or friend's depression is the result of money problems, bereavement or illness in the family, work or relationship difficulties. The importance of the underlying physical problems that render a patient vulnerable to these trigger factors is seriously underestimated. However, women, more often than men, realise that an abnormal biochemical or hormonal balance may be the underlying cause of the patient's depressive state. Nearly 90 per cent of relations would welcome more support when they are looking after their relative, and more information about their troubles.



Depressives: not alone

At its last conference, the Campaign dealt with the problems that depressed patients have at work. A poll showed that 63 per cent of employers were likely to be prejudiced against employing a person who had a history of depression, even though more than eight out of ten people are aware that the disease is treatable. Not surprisingly, most patients with a psychiatric history conceal it from their employers. However, this deprives employers of the opportunity of modifying work surroundings and reducing the chance of a relapse. Potentially depressed workers are unusually vulnerable to excessive noise, inappropriate lighting, a mismatch of skills and role, and any uncertainty of what is expected of them.

The Health Department's figures showed that only one in two people with depression consults a GP. Of these, half are incorrectly diagnosed at the outset and, of these, only 50 per cent receive adequate medication. Many patients do not help themselves — only half given the correct dose took it for more than 28 days. This means that only seven in 100 are effectively treated.

IMS Health, a medical data-collecting organisation, suggests that the figure of 4,385,689 sufferers from depression may already be wrong. Its research shows that numbers have doubled between 1994 and 1998 from four to nine million, and its studies show that even with correct diagnosis, only 39 per cent continued to take antidepressants for the minimum period of six months. Regrettably the average dose prescribed is usually half that recommended by specialists.

Milk from the ewe is good for you

HOMOEOPATHS use dogs' milk to treat, among other conditions, overactive imaginations. But for most Britons milk is derived from either a cow, goat or nursing mother. The concept of sheep's milk for human consumption may not be as unusual as dogs' milk, but we are not culturally conditioned to accept it. Medically speaking, we are making a mistake.

Ewes' milk has at least 25 per cent more protein than that from a cow, and twice as much as that from a goat. It also has more lactose, and is creamier, than both — all of which makes it very nutritious. Although cheese made from sheep's milk contains more fat than, say, blue cheese made from cows' milk, the amount of cholesterol in the cheese from cows, goats and sheep is the same: 45 per cent of the fat in sheep's cheese is as a mono or polyunsaturated form, which should make the arterial system much healthier. The energy-giving value of sheep's milk is 25 per cent greater than the other two.

Sheep's milk is available anywhere in the United Kingdom, and is recommended for people with such allergies as asthma, eczema and other skin problems, or who find that dairy products upset them. Sheep's milk is also said to be good for "neurotics", so that, after all, their variative imaginations might not need homoeopathic pills prepared from the milk of an obliging dog.

One group of people who could overcome their objections to sheep's milk with advantage are those prone to osteoporosis, for it may contain up to twice as much calcium as cows' milk, as well as more zinc, magnesium and phosphorus.

● *The British Sheep Dairying Association: 01420 563151*



Sheep's milk has many advantages over that of cows

A healthier chance of leukaemia survival

IN 1979, when Margaret Thatcher first moved into 10 Downing Street, Lawrence Faldo became the first person to receive a bone marrow transplant in Britain from an identical twin. Lawrence was 27 and had leukaemia. Twenty years on, unlike Mrs Thatcher's government, he is still going strong and the father of triplets, two boys and a girl, now aged nine.

The three are due to ride in a bikeathon for Leukaemia Research in Battersea Park on Sunday, June 13, when four bicycle rides are starting from the park. The money raised from the pledges will go to the Leukaemia Research Fund of Great Ormond Street Hospital. Last year 2,700 cyclists took part and were sent on their way, through the dripping rain, by Glenda Jackson, the minister in charge of London's transport.

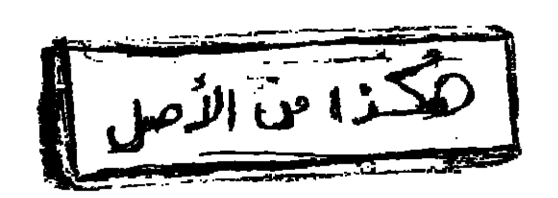
The treatment of many types of leukaemia has been one of the success stories of postwar medicine. When I was a junior hospital doctor, it was not uncommon for small children to be admitted with leukaemia and to die within a matter of days. Now a realistic, but not always attainable goal, is a cure for all cases of acute lymphoblastic leukaemia and acute myelogenous leukaemia. The babies who, 40 years earlier, would have died rapidly now have a good chance of living a normal lifespan.

There is unlikely to be any one cause of leukaemia. The fears that were expressed about living near pylons or power stations have abated, but the latest anxiety is that life near an estuary may be associated with a slightly higher than normal — but statistically significant — susceptibility to this group of diseases. Pollution in the water is cited as a possible reason.

● *Leukaemia Research Fund London Bikeathon: 0181-671 5500.*







Let me tell you a story

Ben Haggarty is a master of man's oldest tradition. Interview by **Erica Wagner**



First, there was the word . . . Ben Haggarty, professional storyteller: children and adults are spellbound by his tales of the gods and monsters that haunt us still

The six-year-olds were silent. No big deal? OK. *The six-year-olds* were silent for *nearly an hour*. It was a Friday afternoon at the Science Museum in London, and I watched as they sat enraptured, listening to Ben Haggarty tell stories. Ben is a professional storyteller, and I, too, was spellbound — *I don't use the word lightly — as Ben*, with no props other than his sombre black suit, bright yellow shirt and a rather extraordinary Burmese temple bell, told stories of magic and monsters that turned *the austere lecture theatre around us into* a flickering cave of wonder.

But Haggarty — *one of the foremost fig*ures in the British storytelling revival of the past 20 years and a co-founder (with Hugh Lupton and Pomme Clayton) of The Company of Storytellers — doesn't just tell stories for children. *I* first encountered him at the British Museum, flanked by winged Assyrian lions, telling a two-hour version of the 5,000-year-old *Epic of Gilgamesh. His account of the* wildman Enkidu's frolics with the Holy Whore was not for the under-sevens.

Oral culture has been reduced to stand-up comedy

"I'm interested in the speaking *image, the image that* speaks," he tells me as we sit in a Polish café, with lemon tea and cheesecake. His voice is strong and flexible, compelling even when he is not in front of an audience. "Something has happened just before; something will happen afterwards, but that moment, *there*, is full of all that's been and all that's going to come; the art of storytelling is knowing how to choose that moment."

On the eve of World Book Day it seems well to remember that long, long before the book was the story. "Most of the world's literature is oral," says Marina Warner, whose latest work exploring myth and literature, *No Go The Bogeyman, was published by Chatto & Windus* last year. "Many of the things we think of as 'written', such as the Gospels, are actually presented as a kind of transcript. It is only recently that the written has come to be considered 'authentic', and the oral somehow lesser, or debased."

Michael Ignatieff, the author and critic who has seen Haggarty's work, notes that while novels such as Don DeLillo's *Underworld* and Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* testify that we haven't lost our patience for big stories, oral cul*ture has been reduced to little more than* stand-up comedy. But the traditional story still has great value: "The story is the basic organising device for giving information meaning. Our need for informa*tion is incorrigible; so our need for stories* is incorrigible, too. The danger is when it *all gets packaged out to Disney*."

Ben Haggarty has no doubts — as no one who has ever heard him would doubt — about the authenticity and con*tinued existence of oral cul*ture. His tales are not memorised but improvised, following a determined path but taking the listener on a different journey each telling. One of the tales I heard him tell was the terrifying *Eaten Father, Eaten Mother*, of East European origin, which finds a young prince in flight from Death. ("Kings and death, that's what *most storytelling's about*," Ben says.) "Once upon at time," he begins. "Once — not twice, not three times, but only once and never again" — that is how it is, the story unfolding in *front of you now and now and now*.

So what makes a storyteller special? Can anyone tell a story? Haggarty makes a sharp divide between the hearthside, or informal, tradition and the professional one. Medieval Irish storytellers, he says, could be trained for up to a dozen years. He clearly sees his own apprenticeship in these terms; he is no amateur. He has a repertoire of about 250 stories, some of which are tellings of the great epics such as *Gilgamesh*, the *Mahabarata* or the *Welsh Mabinogion, and some of which*, like *Eaten Father, Eaten Mother*, are drawn from many different traditional sources but fashioned by him.

He has always been drawn to stories with aspects of magic and epic. He thought, at first, that he would find what he was looking for in the theatre. In the late 1970s he spent time with the radical theatre company Welfare State International, which had moved away from conventional theatre toward myth and masque. It was while working as a scene shifter — "I was a Cosmic Midwife: I had huge cardboard tits and a big hat with plastic babies hanging from the rim" — at *an outdoor performance that he realised* he was on the wrong track.

"It had rained and I had to vacuum up all these puddles. And then, just when they were about to start, it began to rain *again and I had to vacuum again*. We were staying in caravans on a reclaimed rubbish tip, and when I went back to my caravan someone had left a copy of a magazine with photographs of Peter Brook's company *performing The Conference of the Birds* — Helen Mirren and all these people being birds in their ordinary clothes . . . and I just thought, **** it, I've spent the whole day vacuuming up bloody puddles! All this cardboard tits and stuff — it's too complicated."

So Brook, he assumed, would provide the answer; he took himself to Avignon in 1978 to watch the Brook company over and over again. But Brook convinced him to choose another path. "He helped me to realise that I wasn't interested in plays — nothing I saw on stage was as good as what I saw in *here*," he says, a finger at his temple. "It dawned on me: why don't you just go and tell the stories?"

He put in his "flying time", as he calls it, working *with multicultural projects in* West London in the early 1980s; working in schools, where his vibrant tales can give children of all cultures ac*cess to each others' stories, is* still a large part of what he does, although changes in school funding have meant that, to his great regret, he is called *in less often. He re*mains involved with London's Crick-Crack Club, of which he was a co-founder in 1987; by 1989 he was in charge of a 15-day international storytelling festival at the South Bank with a budget of £87,000. "That," he says somewhat ruefully, "is what turned my hair grey."

Kings and death — that's what it is all about

He was an adviser, too, to the *Storyteller* series with John Hurt from Jim Hen*son Productions: he chose the tales*, Anthony Minghella wrote the scripts. With The Company of Storytellers, he continues to be involved with that and with the international storytelling festival Beyond the Borders — "Womad without the tunes," as he calls it — at St Donat's Castle in Wales. He'll be at the Hay Festival with other storytellers. It's a fairly itinerant life. How *many people do you know who can start a* sentence: "So I met this Lakota Sioux woman in Stockport . . ."? Home is now in Worcestershire with his wife, Waz, a painter, and their two children — Blade, 12, and Bethany, ten — but he is hardly *ever there*.

The sacrifice seems worth it to him. He does what he loves to do and he possesses a rare skill. He says he is never tempt*ed to write down his stories* — a tape he made some years ago he withdrew from sale. For a writer this is a strange concept: but Haggarty seems to balance easily between the notions that while what he does is his alone, the stories are not. American storytellers, he tells me with a sigh, have begun to sue each other for possession of their tales. It is not something he would ever resort to, which he explains by telling me of a trip he took to India a few years ago. Travelling in a rural area, he happened upon a wonderful artist, bought one of his paintings and went off. Two hours later he returned: "And there was the guy — he had rolled out another piece of paper and was repainting the same work I'd just bought. I heard this voice inside me which said 'No! *that's mine!*' — *that's what the West*, with its culture of the individual artist, had taught me. I realised that from his point of view, it wasn't mine. It was a painting he had sold: he would make another one."

The book remains on the shelf, static; although a reader's response to it may change with each reading, and each reader will understand it differently. The storyteller's work is elusive: the price of your ticket doesn't give you anything you can take away. But if you have a chance to *hear* the tales which have shaped the dreams of humankind, tales of the gods and monsters that haunt us still, then sit down and listen. You might just discover that you, too, find the plot.

● *Ben Haggarty, c/o Traditional Storytelling Projects, Marley Bank, Whitbourne, Worcs WR6 5RU; tel: 01886 821576. He and other storytellers will be appearing at the Hay Festival, Hay-on-Wye, Saturday and Sunday May 29, 30. Box office: 01497 821299 or 821217.*
The Beyond the Borders International Storytelling Festival is at St Donat's Castle, South Glamorgan, July 2-4. Box office: 01446 794848.

Celebrity corner

Primrose Hill's literati and glitterati have responded in force to **Tina Gaudoin's** SOS to SOL — Save Our Libraries



The actors Sadie Frost, left, and Jude Law; Spice Girl Mel B



Harry Enfield, left; Isabel Fonseca and Martin Amis

A friend who counts herself a pretty hardened PR expert (and former tabloid journalist) casts her eye over a list of celebrities pinned to my noticeboard. "Hah," she says, "you'll be lucky to get one reply from that lot."

I protest that my hitlist (which admittedly includes *such literary* heavyweights as Martin Amis and Alan Bennett, alongside such "hot" thesps as Jude *Law and Sadie Frost*) is in a good cause: to stop the Government closing libraries nationwide and specifically our "local" — Chalk Farm Library, in Primrose Hill, North London. My friend is unconvinced. All celebrities care about, she contends, is themselves.

Primrose Hill certainly has plenty of celebrity inhabitants. At any given moment a host of the notable and notorious can be spotted going about their chores — Ben Elton picking up his dry-cleaning, Alan Bennett cycling, Lucy and Harry Enfield walking their first-born, the Natural Nylon gang (Jude Law, Sadie Frost, Jonny Lee Miller, Sean Pertwee and Ewan McGregor) drinking coffee, and the Gallagher brothers generally misbehaving.

The attraction is not hard to fathom. As Martin Amis noted, PH presents a kind of "pastoral idyll". If anyone were to tell *you that just over* a mile from the West End there exists an exquisite expanse of green, peopled primarily by a tiny close-knit community (from both *ends of* the social spectrum) inhabiting sugared almondcoloured *houses and* enjoying the kind of "village atmosphere" that could otherwise be *found only* in the wilds of the Outer Hebrides, you would call him/her a liar or Fay Weldon. (Weldon based part of her book/TV series *Big Women* in the area.)

But what marks it out from other big celeb hunting grounds *such as Notting Hill* is that Primrose Hillites pride themselves on their ability to affect a spectacular indifference to their famous neighbours. When Derek Draper's fame was at its zenith, a barrister who lives opposite knocked *on his door. Draper opened* it expecting a torrent of abuse or praise. He got neither. The barrister, who had no idea who Draper was, merely requested that he remove the life-size cut*out of Bill Clinton from* his living-room window as it was scaring his children.

When a group of schoolgirls hung out on the top of Primrose Hill with a behatted, parka-wearing, laconic northern male, it wasn't until he had scrounged a cigarette and ambled off that they acknowl*edged to each other* that it was Liam Gallagher. Spice Girl Mel B also recently experienced the Primrose Hill treatment. A couple of weeks ago she stationed herself, baby, husband and various friends outside The Tea Cosy, a local café. "*Nobody bothered her* all afternoon," says an observer. "I couldn't tell if she was *pleased or put out*."

Maybe Camden council thought that residents would display the same indifference when it announced, almost without warning, and without proper consultation, its decision to close Chalk Farm, Belsize Park and Kilburn libraries. Perhaps it thought that parent and toddler groups, pensioner support groups and hundreds of regular users would accept their lot. Certainly it assumed that by creating a superlibrary in Swiss Cottage it was *doing local inhabitants, living* within what it disingenuously called a "one-mile radius", a favour. But it became clear in the weeks after the ruling that hundreds, maybe thousands, of individuals would be unable, for economic, social or physical *reasons, to frequent the super*library. "The local library is our one point of contact; with*out it we will be isolated*," says a septuagenarian resident. A legal challenge to Camden's decision was mounted, but we needed help to give the Save Our *Libraries* campaign national prominence.

In our household bizarre *events began to occur. During* a heated exchange of views with my husband over who would unload the dishwasher, Harry Enfield left a message *on the answering machine* pledging his help. (The headline in *The Camden New Journal* read "Oi Camden! No!")

Letters of support arrived from Sam Mendes and Ben Elton. Mendes, who cast Nicole Kidman in *The Blue Room*, is scandalised: "Primrose Hill Library was where I *first experienced the* joys of *Asterix*."

I exited the shower one morning to pick up the phone. "Hello," says a familiar voice, "this is Jonny Lee Miller. *Sure I'll help you* out." The same day I arrived home to find my babysitter hopping from foot to foot: "Sean Pertwee has left a *message — he's against* library closures." My hero, Alan Bennett, sends a postcard in his spidery scrawl. "You can add my name to your list as long as I can avoid those journalists." I write back *and confess that I am one*. Isabel Fonseca, Martin Amis's wife, *says that Amis will speak* out against the closures at a sold-out reading he is giving in Swiss Cottage Library. "I need all the facts," she says.

We are on a roll. Esther Freud agrees to give a reading, Joan Bakewell is pictured in the national press supporting the legal challenge, Rachel Weisz talks about saving PH library to *Tatler*, and Sadie *Frost and Jude Law ring to* offer support.

So with all this celebrity backing will the Save Our Libraries campaign succeed? *Our fingers are crossed*. Does Camden feel ashamed of its bid to save £110,000 this year by cutting off the lifeblood of three local communities?It had better. Have Primrose Hill celebrities shown that they care passionately about the world *beyondtheir own their door*steps? Absolutely.

Interestingly, there's one on *my hitlist* I have *yet* to hear from. Strange really; one would imagine that at the moment he might have a bit of time on his hands. Derek *Draper, Primrose Hill* resident and man of the masses, are you out there?

The heart of darkness defies reason

It is impossible to know which of our loners will turn killer

In William Golding's novel, *The Lord of the Flies*, Ralph, the well-meaning schoolboy whose friend Piggy has been savagely killed by a gang of his classmates, seeks an explanation for their depravity. What was it that had stripped the veneer of civilisation from a group of middle-class children and turned them into merciless hunters?

He finds no answer. He understands that, at some point, they had crossed a gulf from "common sense, their daylight sanity", and had entered a nightmare world of mayhem and revenge from which they could no longer turn back. But the reason why such forces had been unleashed in the first place were, he realised, unfathomable. Rescued, at the last minute, from the brink of that same nightmare, "Ralph wept for the end of innocence and the darkness of man's heart".

It is hard to do other than weep, like Ralph, for the children of the Columbine High School, massacred for no better reason than that were an easy target for ungoverned hatred. Where that hatred stemmed from, and why it sought so bloody an outlet, will have to wait until we know more about the members of the gang that carried it out, their personalities, their backgrounds, and their lethal alienation. Already it seems clear from how they behaved and what they wore – the black trenchcoats, the ski masks, the sunglasses, all a crude pastiche out of Quentin Tarantino — that this was an act of vengeance against a society which had, in some real or imagined way, rejected them. But that scarcely begins to explain such sustained and random violence.

Magnus Linklater

Nor does the growing number of similar examples at schools in America and Britain provide much help. Lord Cullen, who conducted the inquiry into the massacre at Dunblane Primary School, heard detailed evidence on the state of mind that had driven the damaged loner, Thomas Hamilton, to murder 17 pupils and their teacher on March 13 1996. Two of the principal psychologists he called disagreed about whether Hamilton was a paranoid personality or a psychopath, but they both ruled out any form of mental illness. He took no drugs, he did not smoke or drink, he had no physical abnormalities. That he was lonely, rejected and embittered was obvious, but it was the sheer banality of his life rather than evidence of his sinister intent that struck the inquiry most forcibly.

Lord Cullen saw Hamilton's repeated failures — sexual, social and professional — as leading up to a fatal point at which the "daylight sanity" referred to by Golding gave way to nightmare madness. But even he could not say what had pitched so vacuous a character into mass murder. "His personality was characterised by a desire to control others in which his guns were the focus of his fantasies," said Cullen. "It seems to me that he lacked any real insight into the fact that his conduct had led to the decline of his fortunes and in his reputation. In that situation he turned his fantasy into reality in order to achieve control in one final and terrible manner."

We may find elements of this recourse to killing as the ultimate weapon of control from events at Columbine High School. But in other respects the comparison with Dunblane is remote. Instead of the demons inside one grown man, the American killers belonged to a group of adolescents who seem to have fuelled their own sick fantasies by indulging a shared idea.

If it is true that they read neo-fascist propaganda, admired Hitler, and held racist views, then this may have been a catalyst for violence on a scale which no normal human being could otherwise contemplate: and suicide at the end of it would be the final gesture of defiance. A bunch of ordinary dropouts, brought together by extremist views, was transformed into a death squad. "The group that storms the Bastille," wrote Sartre, "is totally different from the group that stands at a bus-stop."

Why children, though, and why choose victims so vulnerable, with weaponry so ferocious? Perhaps the simplest explanation is that killing children is the most repugnant of all crimes, the one that prompts most outrage from a society that is itself despised. In a culture ridden with violence, where images of brutality suffuse film and television, the act that can still shock is the massacre of innocents; choosing the Nazis as a symbol of evil is another way of causing maximum outrage; and to target racial minorities is to reject accepted standards of civilised behaviour. The weapons used were those of the terrorist. By opening up with machineguns and grenades in a school, terrorism becomes domestic.

There may be parallels here with the killing of Stephen Lawrence, or the nail bomb explosion in Brixton. Whatever the role of the white gang investigated by the Macpherson inquiry, there is little doubt that its shared ideas about race, and its violent language, translated into violent action as two of them simulated stabbing attacks. The nail bomb wrought indiscriminate vengeance on society as a whole.

Random they may be, but tragedies like these are far from isolated. The ease with which the gang secured its murderous weapons, the vulnerability of the school, and the fact that the attackers seem deliberately to have copied similar acts of horror, suggest that there will be more to come. However much we learn about those who cross the border from reality to murderous fantasy, we will never find a foolproof way of identifying them in advance. In the end, we will still be confronted by the unimaginable, the darkness of man's heart, for which there is no rational explanation.

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We're all Blairites now

The global economic crisis has secured the victory of the Third Way

When Tony Blair arrives in Washington today to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Nato and to deliver one of his famous seminars on the Third Way, he ought to express some thanks for the unsung heroes of his political triumphs. When he goes to the tomb of the unknown soldier in Arlington, he should pray not only for the Nato pilots in Kosovo, but also for the shanty dwellers of Thailand, the hungry pensioners of Russia and the jobless workers of Korea, who have become the unwitting shock troops of the Third Way's global victory over the dark forces of Thatcherism and Reaganomics.

The great global economic crisis, which started in Thailand and Indonesia nearly two years ago and reached its apogee last summer with the financial collapse in Russia, was one of the luckiest breaks that Bill Clinton and Tony Blair ever had, even in their amazingly lucky careers. Not only did the misfortunes of Thailand, Korea and Russia end up actually helping both the American and British economies. They also, by testing to destruction the free market economic principles of the 1980s, created a worldwide constituency for the Third Way.

The Blair-Clinton style of politics has suddenly become all the rage, even among the predatory capitalists of Wall Street and the former economic fundamentalists of the Republican Right. Peter Lilley's proclamation this week that the market had its limits is only the latest conversion to the new consensus. Nobody seems to believe any longer that markets work best if businesses are simply left to their own devices or that capitalism can avoid booms and busts without active government intervention.

In short, the Third Way faith in "smart" government seems to have triumphed completely over the Thatcher-Reagan doctrine that government is the problem and market forces the solution.

But what has all this to do with the global economic crisis? We can feel free to review the crisis as a historical phenomenon now that it has been declared more or less officially over by Michel Camdessus, the managing director of the International Monetary Fund.

The crisis had profound ideological effects. These were highlighted in the televised address given by President Clinton this Tuesday on the unlikely subject of "the global financial architecture". President Clinton committed himself to interventions in the ultimate free market — the global financial system — of a kind that American governments have resisted for decades. He said that international financial markets need to be closely regulated by international agencies; that Western countries must commit large sums of public money to Third World debt relief and to safety nets against future financial crises; that Western banks must make large contributions to the losses suffered by developing nations and developing countries must expose their domestic economic policies to unprecedented external surveillance if they want to enjoy the benefits of Western capital. All of these policies would have seemed wildly heretical in the years of the free market consensus and similar proposals for "a new financial architecture" were being ridiculed in Washington, Bonn and Tokyo as recently as a year ago. It is worth recalling that as recently as last summer, George Shultz, the respected Secretary of State in the Reagan Administration, was seriously proposing the total abolition of the IMF and the World Bank.

Anatole Kaletsky

An even more important consequence of the global crisis has been the total rehabilitation of the sort of active economic management officially abandoned during the monetarist heyday of free markets. In such former bastions of laissez faire monetarism as the IMF and the bond houses of Wall Street, it is now completely taken for granted that capitalist economies need to be actively managed, either by politicians or by public officials, in order to avoid booms and busts.

The idea that central bankers and finance ministers are inherently incompetent to manage economic cycles, while bond traders always know what they are doing, seems so stupid it is not even treated as a joke. As for the protestations by the European Central Bank and the Bundesbank that interest rates should not be used as an "instrument of counter-cyclical demand management", people in Washington and on Wall Street respond with cynicism. American bankers argue: "These people in Frankfurt are just lying: trust me, they are not as stupid as they sound."

Even the West's actions in Kosovo have been profoundly affected by new attitudes to national sovereignty, global interdependence and international regulation. Nato's intervention is exactly analogous, and closely related, to the way that global financial institutions such as the IMF and the various G7 bodies took upon themselves unprecedented powers to intervene in the domestic economic affairs of stricken developing nations in the name of the global economic stability and financial probity. Ideologically the global financial crisis has dealt a crushing blow to the 1980s doctrines of market fundamentalism and laissez faire geopolitics, opening the field to the universalism and interventionism of the Blair-Clinton Third Way. But the crisis has also helped in a more mundane sense.

The unprecedented political popularity of both Bill Clinton and Tony Blair is a direct byproduct of the global economic crisis. On the basis of all political precedents, the British and American governments should now be in the depths of their mid-term popularity slumps. Yet both Clinton and Blair are as popular today as when they were elected. To many observers this breakdown of the standard political cycle may appear a mystery. But it is quite comprehensible from an economic point of view. Politicians get elected by promising prosperity, low inflation, low taxes, good public services and low interest rates. They are then punished by the voters when it becomes apparent that they cannot deliver. This normally happens after two years or so. This time, however, neither the British nor American government is succumbing to such a cycle, and the reason is closely connected with the crisis in emerging markets.

This crisis triggered panic in Western financial markets and caused serious suffering for tens of millions of people in developing countries who lost their businesses, savings and jobs. But for Britain and America, whose economies have been growing strongly on the basis of domestic consumption and investment since the mid-1990s, the deflationary shock from emerging markets has been almost completely benign. By early 1997 governments and central banks were already under pressure to raise interest rates and restrain inflation. The godsend for Blair and Clinton was that the global financial crisis intervened, obviating these anti-inflationary measures.

To take the most obvious example, it is almost certain that British interest rates would have been raised a good deal further last year had it not been for the Russian crisis. Whether this more abrupt monetary tightening would have led to a bigger slowdown and a steeper rise in unemployment would have depended on the skill of the Bank of England. But the blame for the resulting economic hardships would certainly have fallen on the Blair Government. A similar story can be told about America, where the strength of the economy and the popularity of Bill Clinton have both been clearly linked to the stellar performance of Wall Street. And nobody on Wall Street any longer disputes that the effect of the crisis in emerging markets on share prices has been extremeley benign, by eliminating inflationary pressures and thus pushing interest rates downwards.

The question now is whether these benign effects begin to turn malignant. If, as seems likely, world recovery accelerates strongly in the next 12 months, will policymakers in the US and Britain take the unpopular measures needed to control inflation? Or will they be lulled into a false sense of security by their surfeit of good luck?

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THE TIMES DIARY

Rock romp

JAMES BOND will battle single-handedly with Spain for control of the Rock of Gibraltar in his next romp. As Pierce Brosnan finishes *The World Is Not Enough*, due to bite fleapits by Christmas, Raymond Benson, the writer authorised by Ian Fleming's literary estate to continue the author's work, is confecting an adventure designed to ruffle Anglo-Spanish relations — with, I gather, cheery advice from the Foreign Office.

More publicly the FO's emissaries are shuttling between London and Madrid to ease tensions over the prickly slab of British territory. José Maria Aznar, the Spanish PM, called it "a base for kidnapping, assassinations ... drug running and money laundering".

It is hoped that 007, who must be knocking back Viagra after all these years, will tangle with the talented Iberian Ines Sastre (with Brosnan below). Bond's new nemesis will be Domingo Espada, an "evil Spanish matador" — but, as Drake proved, the paella munchers should be a breeze.




CHILDREN being shown round Downing St by Gordon Brown the other night were given a rare treat when the Chancellor decided to pop into No 10 to introduce them to the boss. There, at 5pm, sat Cool Tony in jeans, T-shirt — and slippers.

■ THAT loincloth of laddishness, Jeremy Clarkson, was not expelled from his public school as he likes to suggest. Motormouth rumbles that Repton threw him out — for drinking, smoking and slipping into overdrive with local girls. "It wasn't one big thing that got me kicked out," he has said. "Besides bunking off I was caught drinking in the grounds, smoking by the tennis courts, putting Polyfilla in the keyholes and other daft antics."

The mathamatics master of 30 years, Russell Muir, says Jezza completed his A levels and was "rather grey". Says Muir: "He didn't distinguish himself in music, sport, the arts, anything." But in a recent survey, sixth formers named Clarkson "the most distinguished Old Reptonian". Roald Dahl chugged in second.

CITY sorts could be taking a Latinesque siesta at lunch. A Barcelona chain store offering the chance of daytime shut-eye wants to open in London.



■ A CONDOM called the Euro has flopped in the UK after proving a hit with unionists across Europe. Sales are so droopy here that the Dutch manufacturer is to stop promoting it in Britain. Packets, I am told, are decorated with the EU flag. "Sadly there is not the same enthusiasm for the Euro project in Britain," says Fred Julsing, general manager of CMD BV. Andrew Roberts is not surprised: "It is enough to leave most red-blooded Brits feeling rather flaccid."

TO dinner in New York with Ruby Wax, lamenting her fluffy image. "I don't want to be like Faust selling his soul to Aristopheles." Mephistopheles, perhaps?

■ AS HITLER enthusiasts toast his birthday, I ask David Irving, the historian, how the goosestepper spent the day. "He enjoyed military parades," salivates Irving, "and had rooms packed with presents from German industry. On his 50th birthday he was particularly pleased with a model of the battleship *Bismarck*."

AS Sarah Ferguson takes Wedgewood to America, where she will spend over half her time, she is giving up her UK office. The staff of four at a new Fergie HQ is to be slimmed to a lone secretary.

JASPER GERARD

'The war is being fought to destroy the very principles which constitute the West. This is not moral: it is megalomaniac'

John Laughland

Among the charred corpses and smoking ruins of Kosovo there lies an unreported casualty. It is not one of the hundreds of physical victims of Nato's bombs but instead a metaphysical one. In 1999 as in 1389, the Blackbird Field has witnessed the defeat of that spiritual body of values which in the postwar period used to be known as the West. This is because the war is being fought to destroy the very principles which constitute the West, namely the rule of law.

Unlike in 1389 however, the enemy is not the Sultan but rather the leaders of the Western nations themselves. It is false to claim, as Tony Blair now does, that Serb mistreatment of the Kosovo Albanians, is the *casus belli*. Instead, the bombing started because President Milosevic refused to allow hostile foreign troops on to Yugoslav soil. Overturning this refusal remains Nato's overriding purpose. Yet this demand is completely incompatible with the logic of a system of sovereign states, which for the past 350 years has formed the basis of Western politics, liberalism and the rule of law.

To be sure, state sovereignty is not an absolute principle. It can be overriden in certain extreme cases. But the present war is being fought in order to override it in all cases, and to remove it completely as a relevant factor in the new world order. Mr Blair has said the war is being fought for "a new internationalism". Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General, has said that its purpose is to establish a precedent for the "new strategic concept" of Nato, namely that it should be able to intervene in the internal affairs of a sovereign state for humanitarian reasons. Nato, by definition, never had this role when it was set up, as a defensive alliance, protecting the sovereign territory of its members.

If the war is post-national in its aims, it is also post-national in its implementation. Nato, an anonymous international apparatus based in Brussels and acting outside the terms of its own charter, is colluding with a group, the Kosovo Liberation Army, whose structures and goals owe very little to any political programme of national liberation for Kosovo and instead a great deal to the needs of its mafia activities and extensive drug-running network. The only nation involved is Serbia, whose wholesale destruction is certainly going to be the outcome of the war, though not its stated aim.

This is why all the war's main protagonists are old enemies of nationhood, Nato and the West. Bill Clinton, Mr Blair, Joschka Fischer and Señor Solana form "the new generation of politicians who hail from the progressive side of politics" of which Mr Blair boasts. Commentators have been wrong to chuckle at the apparent conversion of these one-time opponents of US power, for the truth is much worse. This war represents the most complete fulfilment of their deepest internationalist convictions.

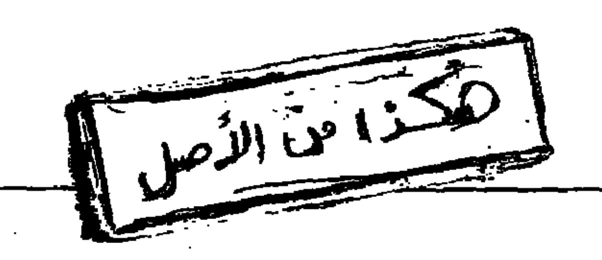
Like the conversion of the New Left to the market, its new warmongering should give no comfort to conservative supporters of economic liberalism or the Atlantic alliance. Instead of being systems for the protection of national liberties, both these have now been subverted into vehicles for their destruction. Mr Blair has even compared the four weeks of bomb attacks on Yugoslavia to the process by which "globalisation is opening up the world's financial architecture for discussion, re-evaluation and improvement". War, it seems, is now the continuation of economic integration by other means.

In place of the old system of national legal systems creating free markets and national liberties, a new world order of universal human rights is being set up. The problem is that the bogus notion of human rights can never provide a basis for either the rule of law or morality. Whereas a national system of justice is a self-contained entity which grows with and defines the society in which it inheres, universal human rights are detached from any rootedness in time or place. Their application therefore inevitably flails around capriciously, according to the latest whim of outrage or the latest fad for victimhood.

It is therefore inevitable that the brave new world of universal human rights is, in fact, a topsy-turvy world of gruesome moral relativism. Why support the KLA, while sidelining the moderate Albanian resistance under Ibrahim Rugova?

Human rights are, by definition, antithetical to the concept of national sovereignty. The idea that there can be such a thing as universal human rights implies that there can be a single global system of civil law with Nato playing the role of world government. But for its sins, mankind has been divided up into different peoples. Any attempt to behave as if this were not so is not moral: it is megalomaniac.

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DEMOCRACY IN DANGER

The West must throw lifelines to beleaguered Montenegro

Montenegro, poor, wildly beautiful and with a proud national identity, is the last republic besides Serbia to have stayed in the shrunken Yugoslav federation. It has been miserably rewarded for a loyalty, now severely strained, that Mr Milosevic has held in contempt. The tiny republic has been progressively undermined, first by the heavy economic and human costs of Slobodan Milosevic's onslaughts in Croatia and Bosnia and the UN sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia, then by Belgrade's efforts to destabilise the democratic Government of President Milo Djukanovic, and now by the Kosovan bloodbath which, while opposing Nato airstrikes, Mr Djukanovic has courageously denounced.

This tiny republic, valiantly trying to stay neutral in this conflict, is in grave danger of being torn apart. Yugoslav forces, which have been ratcheting up pressure for weeks, have begun expelling and killing refugees along Montenegro's frontier with Kosovo. The Yugoslav Army is blocking access to Montenegro from Croatia, directly challenging the Government's authority in an area declared a demilitarised zone by the UN, and demanding full control over the police. The Government is defiant, but has reason to fear a military coup. In a country of divided loyalties, whose "Whites" have long wanted union with Serbia and whose "Greens" want independence, its ousting would lead to civil war.

Serbians have no conceivable interest in instigating this disaster. Montenegro was an independent state from the 14th century until 1918, when communist rebels backed by Serb troops and irregulars overthrew its king and declared union with Serbia. Montenegro's Slavs speak a different dialect of Serbo-Croat and until recently, their clan-based society bore little resemblance to that of the Serbian plains. But the two republics have close cultural and religious affinities; and in hard practical terms, Montenegro offers Serbia its only outlet to the Adriatic, and its only naval base. To open a second front there would be political as well as human folly; and Montenegro would be no push-over. The interior police are loyal to the President, and although they are heavily outnumbered by the 2nd Yugoslav Army based there, many of its conscripts are Montenegrins who could turn against Belgrade.

Mr Milosevic, reckless as he has always been of Serbia's real interest, may calculate otherwise. The youthful Mr Djukanovic, a former ally who has become his most formidable critic, is not just an outspoken opponent he wants out, but a standing rebuke to Belgrade's stifling police state. Since Montenegrins voted him into office in 1997, he has promoted democracy, press freedom, economic modernisation and a tolerant, pluralistic society which respects the political and cultural rights of its large Albanian and other minorities. But it has been a difficult balancing act, and the war has made him temptingly vulnerable.

Enormous tensions are imposed by the arrival of 70,000 Kosovan refugees since the air war started. With 25,000 already there, along with 25,000 Croats and Bosnians, the population of 640,000 has been swollen by a fifth; and the country is also losing $18-20 million a month from the war, without counting Nato bomb damage. Nato has shouldered a large part of the logistical burden of helping refugees in Albania and Macedonia; Montenegro is on its own, and needs proportionately greater financial support. But that is no longer all.

By destroying Montenegro, Mr Milosevic may think that he would not only efface a political rival; he would demonstrate that Nato was powerless to prevent the devastation of a republic that its air campaign has tried to spare and which it supports as a regional bastion of sanity and reason. On April 2, after Mr Milosevic ominously appointed a crony to command the 2nd Yugoslav Army based in Montenegro, Javier Solana warned Belgrade against unseating Mr Djukanovic, insisting that Nato had "plans to stop" a coup. Yesterday Madeleine Albright spoke only of unspecified "serious consequences". If a plan exists — and Nato's continuing reliance on air power must be cause for doubt — it should be dusted down. For if it is bluff, evidence mounts disturbingly that Mr Milosevic is preparing to call it.

ARMS AND THE BOYS

Americans face yet another school shooting tragedy

After similar incidents in Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Oregon and Pennsylvania in the past few years, the latest tragedy at the Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, might be expected to shock but, sadly, not surprise Americans. Although the scenes are familiar, both the character and location of this shooting are unusual. The use of home-made bombs by teenagers, allegedly based on information obtained from the Internet, is a chilling development. Littleton is a leafy suburb of Denver, not an insular Southern town or a dysfunctional Californian enclave. In that sense, if such an outrage can happen here it could occur almost anywhere in America.

The political reaction in the United States has had a predictable, almost ritualistic, quality. President Clinton has again urged the states to redouble their efforts at "pre-emptive counselling" and asked Congress to consider further gun control measures. Congressional leaders evidently have little appetite for such legislation. The National Rifle Association (NRA), which by perverse coincidence is scheduled to hold its annual convention in Denver next week, has issued its familiar refrain that "guns don't kill people, people kill people". This is obviously true, although teenagers armed with semi-automatic rifles rather than water pistols do tend to be particularly effective at conducting massacres.

The truth, though, is that it is not only the single-minded opposition of organisations such as the NRA that prevents either the various states or Congress itself adopting gun control measures. Colorado's distinctive state constitution allows the electorate to choose to hold a referendum on almost any issue. A simple petition of citizens is enough to initiate this process. No American state has a more permissive system of popular participation. Denver itself is a very liberal city with a record of electing anti-war activists and radical environmentalists. If really sweeping gun control laws cannot be passed here then, in a sense, they cannot be expected to make much progress anywhere in the United States at present.

The possession of personal arms has in fact become a central issue in the current session of the Colorado state legislature. This proposal, however, supported by the Republican Governor, is to render legal the carrying of concealed weapons by the vast majority of citizens. Similar measures have already been passed in a number of Southern and Western states. The Littleton slaughter may serve to stop this attempt. The fact that it had a respectable prospect of passage until yesterday is a powerful reflection of the prevailing culture in many American states. The most that can be expected is some extension of parental responsibility for the acts of armed minors.

Congress will, of course, face demands to do something. It will studiously avoid any serious constraints on gun ownership and focus instead on the supposed influence of the Internet. There will doubtless soon be proposals put forward for restricting the sort of information that can be posted on this medium. Apart from being virtually unpoliceable in practice, any such legislation would almost certainly (and correctly) be shredded by the US Supreme Court as a transparent violation of the free speech provisions of the First Amendment. The sole and unfortunate conclusion is that the Columbine High School killings are, alas, very unlikely to be the last of their kind.

IT'S A BUG'S WORLD

London Zoo weaves a wondrous Web of Life

Is it Pliny's fault that crawly things give us the creeps? A translation of his *Natural History* introduced the word insect to the English in 1601. And insects, he explained in it, were just "little vermine". The scuttlers and inchers he included in this category — the caterpillars, pismires, grasshoppers and worms — may since have been sorted into more precise phyla, but still the idea lingers that any such creature is little more than a pest to be squashed. Tomorrow's opening of a Web of Life display at London Zoo should therefore be welcomed, for it celebrates not only the loveliness, intricacy and diversity of invertebrates, but also the crucial role that they play. Our entire ecosystem, it seems, is supported on the back of a "bug".

The energy-efficient show space, in itself, gives proof of invertebrate relevance. Modelled on the complex structures evolved by termites to maintain even temperatures in the hottest, most inhospitable places on Earth, the glass-sided building is chilled in summer by the geothermic cooling effects of a borehole, while the five chimneys which diffuse the stale winter warmth, mimic the ventilating architecture of a termite mound.

When construction of this building began, London Zoo's wolf pack was removed to quieter surroundings. Residents of Primrose Hill missed the untamed night howls which tinted urban dreams. But in welcoming a breeding pair of threatened maned wolves to Regent's Park as part of the Web of Life exhibit, they will be reminded that it is upon the myriad plenitude of invertebrate life that the survival of such fine predators depends. Maned wolves in the wild snack on beetles, on insectivorous rodents such as the mouse or shrew. If biodiversity is to be maintained, if such gravely endangered species as the golden headed lion tamarin or the bleeding heart dove are to be rescued, the multitudinous tiny creatures which help to support them must also be preserved.

The fibrils of the food chain may seem as imperceptible as the miniscule brine shrimp, as frangible as the brittle star, but they are as ubiquitous as the bluebottle, as long as the Mombassan train millipede, as complex as the mosaic of a postman butterfly's wing. This is what visitors will learn. They will be connected to so intricate a web of life that they will gaze twice before they decide to stamp or swat again.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Differing views on decommissioning

From Mr John McPhie

Sir, How ill-served the people of Northern Ireland are by their elected representatives (leading article, April 20). They have made their wishes clear in a referendum and yet the politicians cannot deliver. Perhaps they don't really want to deliver. If they did and Northern Ireland enjoyed a peaceful, normal existence there would be no more visits to the Oval office, no media attention: how boring life would become (and how utterly blissful it would be for the rest of us not to have to listen to their never-ending, pointless, illogical, circuitous arguments).

It is time for the issue of decommissioning to be forgotten. For the IRA and for others it smacks of surrender and it will never happen. If it is done in token form (which would more than likely be the case), it will be meaningless, and, anyway, vast quantities of new weapons are readily available to any willing buyer. The whole point is whether the weapons are being used or not — and they are not.

Decommissioning is not a principle that is going to affect the future of Northern Ireland. It is easy to understand why it was originally included in the Good Friday agreement, but it is not set in stone and, for the sake of peace, it must be dropped.

It is beholden on the politicians to deliver the peace the Province craves — and soon. The price of peace has been too high for it to be lost because of the myopia, intransigence, selfishness and lack of imagination of certain Northern Ireland politicians.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN McPHIE,
Rampton Prebend,
Westgate, Southwell NG25 0JH.
April 20.

From Mr Harry Barnes, MP for North East Derbyshire (Labour)

Sir, Your leader argues that the British and Irish Governments should be willing to "park" the Good Friday agreement until the autumn. This would be what is termed a "soft landing" rather than a "crash landing".

However, there is another option canvassed eloquently by *The Irish Times* in its own leader of April 19. It notes the dangers of the Belfast agreement unravelling if it is parked, and possibly a reversion to large-scale violence — fuelled by confrontations over the marching season and Drumcree. It raises the possibility of allowing the creation of a power-sharing executive without Sinn Fein until such a time as Sinn Fein can join the peace train further down the line.

There is much merit in this alternative approach. It must be clear to most people in these islands, and to international opinion, that all major items have been resolved or are in the process of being resolved with the sole exception of decommissioning.

Given the IRA's bloody record and the dangers of vast arsenals being raised, used again or poisoning the political process, a modest gesture on decommissioning is the very least that democrats can accept for bringing Sinn Fein into the heart of government.

Let us accept the word of Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness that they cannot deliver on this. But let us still allow them further time to do so, without throwing away the massive gains that the Belfast agreement represents.

Yours sincerely,
HARRY BARNES,
House of Commons.
April 20.

Bombing of Serbia

From Group Captain D. A. P. Saunders-Davies, RAF (retd)

Sir, The Armed Forces know only too well that there is no such thing as an infallible weapon nor an infallible operator. Moreover, it has been a part of doctrine for many years that, while you cannot win a war without air power, neither can you win it with air power alone.

I would lay long odds that the Chiefs of Staff briefed strongly against the Yugoslav adventure and foresaw what the Serb reaction might be. They were overruled by politicians adopting a high moral tone having never seen a shot fired in anger.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID SAUNDERS-DAVIES,
Home Farm Cottage,
Ower, Hampshire SO51 5AN.

From Dr Tony McAllister

Sir, The term "surgical strikes" has been demonstrated by the recent killing of both Serbs and Albanians by Nato bombs to be the callous and inaccurate description it has always been. Nato has tried to blame these deaths on Mr Milosevic, but this just would not wash. Dropping bombs kills people, and it was Nato who did the dropping.

Whatever Mr Milosevic and his troops have done, it does not justify continuing this lethal bombardment. Please let us stop the bombing and resume talks about the future of this region of Serbia.

Yours faithfully,
TONY McALLISTER,
4 Redwoods,
Bengeo, Hertford SG14 3BT
April 15.

Calling time on the coronets?

From Mr Paul N. Arthur

Sir, The recent level of correspondence on the reform of the House of Lords (letters, March 30, 31; April 6, 13, 15) shows how successful new Labour's spin operation has been. The fact is that it is not the House of Lords (which works perfectly well as it is) which needs reforming but the House of Commons. This, as Peter Riddell has observed on several occasions, could be done by strengthening the power of select committees, allowing for a much more rigorous and effective examination of the executive.

As for the Lords, there is much to say for an appointed, elected and hereditary element, together with a proportion of seats allocated by lot. In the meantime, so long as the focus of attention remains the reform of the second chamber, I shall continue to read the letters you publish with amusement.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL N. ARTHUR,
12 Bracewood Gardens,
Park-Hill-Rise, Croydon CR0 5JL.
pnarthur@msn.com
April 20.

From Mr W. Dixon Smith

Sir, There can be no more appropriate name for a reformed upper chamber than "The House of Lords" and no more appropriate titles for its members than "Lords and Ladies".

The House of Lords, under such designation, forms part of our British tradition in the truest sense of that much abused phrase: that is to say, it retains a clear and undeniable function. It is a political workshop, and its members political workers.

In spite of the determination of successive Prime Ministers to transform it into a retreat for the recipients of empty honours and for party nominees, the House of Lords has often better represented the views of the British people than has the "democratic" Commons.

Of course, if the workaday titles of "Lords and Ladies" are to be retained for elected members, then those who presently sport costume jewellery coronets will have to lay them aside.

Yours sincerely,
W. DIXON SMITH,
6 Welland Rise,
Acomb, York YO26 5HH.
April 18.

From Mr T. Pearce

Sir, Would it not be a good idea to reintroduce the University Seats as part of the elected body of a reformed second chamber?

This could give a group of independent members chosen by a well-educated electorate.

Yours faithfully,
T. PEARCE,
22 Shaftesbury Road,
Beckenham, Kent BR3 3PW.
April 20.

Devolution challenge for Labour

From Mr David Prockter

Sir, I read with some incredulity your leading article today describing the Chancellor of the Exchequer as the "Defender of Britain" and referring to "perceived English resentments" over devolution. The West Lothian question is a matter of genuine and legitimate concern, not least because Labour Governments elected in the United Kingdom have only twice ever had a majority of English MPs.

In future, while the Scottish assembly looks after its own domestic affairs, the historical likelihood is that Labour Governments will actually be opposed by a majority of English MPs, but sustained by Scottish MPs, in presiding over English domestic affairs. It does not amount to an outbreak of *Braveheart* xenophobia to point out that this is illogical and unreasonable.

We have grown used to hearing members of the Government spinning their way out of this sort of ill-considered muddle with warm words — in this case an appeal to the English "sense of fair play". But it is disappointing to see you accepting a line that could not be further from fair play — let alone common sense.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID PROCKTER,
36 London Road,
Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2AA.
April 16.

From Mr S. Hodson-Pressinger

Sir, Following Gordon Brown's warning Britain against a "retreat into factionalism", we read today that reunified Germany is moving its parliament back to Berlin. Surely there is a lesson to be learnt here?

Germany's constituent states, despite their differences, are not separatist. They are content to remain absorbed into a federal system.

Germans do not wish to see their country fragmenting and reverting back to a collection of small independent states. They are aware of the price paid in unification and the advantages unity has brought. Furthermore, they realise size affects their influence and power, both internationally and within the European Union.

Clearly, Scottish and Welsh separatists could learn from such German pragmatism.

Yours faithfully,
SELWYN HODSON-PRESSINGER,
4 Lyall Street,
Belgravia SW1 X8DW.
April 19.

From Mr William M. Ballantine

Sir, It is all very well for Gordon Brown to tell us all how wonderful it is to be British, but he seems to forget that part of the reason for the rise of the SNP was the language of neo-nationalism used by the Labour Party in Scotland for the past ten years.

Yours faithfully,
W. M. BALLANTINE,
47 The Quarryknowes,
Dean Road, Bo'ness,
West Lothian EH51 0QJ.
April 16.

Millennium denial

From Mr Michael Shaw

Sir, Further to Barry Hyman's letter (April 16), what are we, who are bloody-minded enough to celebrate the millennium at the right time, going to say to those who aren't, on January 1 next? Do we wish them "Happy Exciting Number Change" or welcome them to the year that puts the 20 in 20th century?

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL SHAW,
88 Underdale Road,
Shrewsbury SY2 5EE.
April 16.

Age of consent

From Mr D. J. Littleford

Sir, Whilst completely apathetic to the debate over the age of consent (letters, April 6, 10, 13, 16), I was concerned over the poll results in the Stonewall advertisement (April 13).

In response to the question "Do you believe that in Britain the age of consent should be equal for everyone or not (my italics)?", it appears that 110 per cent (yes, 66 per cent; no, 44 per cent) of the representative sample had a view. But then no wonder they were confused, as it is clearly impossible to answer the question yes or no!

Lies, damned lies and statistics?

Yours faithfully,
D. J. LITTLEFORD,
29 Hill Rise,
Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 2RX.
April 13.

A proper pride

From Mrs Anne Barnard

Sir, Judging by his letter (April 15), Dr Ian Olson has forgotten that many of us do celebrate a great poet on St George's Day, which is also Shakespeare's birthday. Larkin indeed!

Yours faithfully,
ANNE BARNARD,
104 Salmon Street, NW9 8NJ.

Use of nuclear power

From Mr Richard Sergant-Manse

Sir, Global warming appears to me to be an acknowledged fact (report, "Outlook for 2001 is floods, fires and record heat", April 6).

Do we, therefore, really have any choice but to use more nuclear power? It seems to me that the risks of using nuclear power are now fewer than the risks of continuing to use fossil fuels.

Yours faithfully,
R. SERGANT-MANSE,
72 Chorley Road,
Standish, Wigan,
Lancashire WN1 2SS.

Weather report

From Mr David L. Pugh

Sir, When I mowed my front lawn (which it badly needed) in bright sunshine today, it was necessary to break the continuity of the stripes to go around the snowman and snowlady built yesterday by my grandchildren.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID L. PUGH,
Wychwood,
High Street, Toller Porcorum,
Dorchester, Dorset DT2 0DN.
April 17.

Out for a duck?

From Mr William Petrie

Sir, Urban idiocy knows no bounds. A duck is holding up a £15 million millennium project in Bath because it is sitting on eggs (report and photograph, April 19). Margaret Stewart, of the Springs' Foundation, calls the Department of the Environment's decision to refuse the council a licence to remove the duck a "victory for common sense".

If common sense really had triumphed the eggs would have been removed and placed under a broody chicken, leaving the duck free to resume its career of mugging old ladies for bread in the park.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM PETRIE,
Hazelbank Farm, Forres IV36 0RN.
April 19.

Cost of repairs to listed buildings

From Mr John R. Lawrenson

Sir, VAT on church repairs (leading article, April 5; letters, April 12) is a side issue, albeit very important in the amount of money raised voluntarily, handed over with pain to the Government, and graciously returned in part via a cosy quango.

The real question concerns the ownership of churches. Since nationalisation some 465 years ago they have belonged, not, as many assume, to the Church of England, but to the State, and the sad truth is that they have suffered the same fate as nationalised industries.

It would seem both unfair and bad business to allow the Church of England to continue the myth of ownership and the practice of bad management. Better for the State to give all the churches back to those who raised the money to build them in the first place, the parishes. The burden of upkeep rests now on the declining number of elderly people on parochial church councils.

Very often the church is the only real heritage a parish possesses. Hand to the parish members the responsibility of looking after what is, after all, theirs. If they decline the offer, so be it. That church is going to fall down anyway.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN R. LAWRENSON,
The Old Rectory,
Great Waldingfield,
Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0TL.
April 13.

From Mr David Morton

Sir, Churches are not the only organisations troubled by the cost of maintaining and repairing listed buildings. The vast majority of listed buildings are houses, notably stately homes. However, most listed houses are family-sized dwellings, and it is with our stock of domestic listed buildings that the main issue arises.

Most of the repair burden falls on individual homeowners — in many parts of the country on low incomes — for whom the VAT on maintenance is a serious financial handicap.

A maintenance backlog leads to a decline in the condition of our historic built environment. This institute therefore does not support VAT on repairs to any listed building and welcomes the current investigations by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

Possibilities of abuse are often portrayed, but a robust listing process would obviously prevent this. A maximum level of claim in any one year would actually encourage long-term maintenance.

Our illogical system allows relief from VAT for a listed building home extension which the owner can clearly afford, but not a repair which he or she may not be able to, yet which can help to preserve the fabric for future generations to enjoy.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID MORTON
(Convener, Design and Conservation, Historic Environment Panel),
The Royal Town Planning Institute,
26 Portland Place, W1N 4BE.
April 16.

Church 'prudery'

From the Reverend Clive L. Rawlins

Sir, Apropos the Archbishop of Westminster's comment on "society's apparent preoccupation with sex" (letter, April 13), one wonders if it is not the Church rather than society that is so smitten?

There are ten commandments and nine beatitudes — not to mention many more ethical exhortations in the New Testament — but we hear and see comparatively little expostulation on their transgression, not least against such antisocial sins as greed and pride and self-righteousness. Surely "Judge not" is the first principle of love.

Is it not time that the Church took these things more seriously and learnt to celebrate the joys of sex, recognising without embarrassment the proper attractions of a pretty face or figure, and normalised its attitudes to these without this constant knee-jerk censuring?

Anyone who has lived abroad for any length of time is positively assaulted by our obsessive prudery on returning home: "To the pure all things are pure."

Yours sincerely,
CLIVE RAWLINS,
Thistle Cottage,
Upper Bolton,
East Lothian EH41 4HW.
April 13.

Thatcher remembered

From Sir George Engle, QC

Sir, During Lady Thatcher's tenure of No 10 (Libby Purves's article, "Blue remembered thrills", April 20), when relations between her and the Civil Service were far from happy, one of the hot-air hand-drying devices in the Gents near the Cabinet Office Mess (where I used to go for lunch) carried, in Chinagraph, the words "For a personal message from the Prime Minister, press the red button."

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE ENGLE,
32 Wood Lane, N6 5UB.
April 20.

Letters may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk



COURT CIRCULAR

HYATT HOTEL, SEOUL
April 21: Today is the Seventy Third Anniversary of the Birthday of The Queen.

The Queen today visited Andong Province, Korea, calling first at Hahoe Village to view a family house and watch a regional masked dance.

Her Majesty subsequently visited Andong wholesale fruit market and Bonjong Buddhist Temple.

The Queen this afternoon had tea with Korean and British Parliamentarians at the Hyatt Hotel.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this evening attended a concert of Korean and British music and dance with The President and First Lady at the KBS Hall, Seoul.

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness later hosted a reception for Korean and British guests.

The Duke of Edinburgh this morning visited the Panmunjom UN Joint Security Area.

His Royal Highness later visited Inchon Airport construction site, Hyundai Aerospace, Sosan and the new Naval Base and Korean Navy Destroyer *Kwanggaeto the Great* at Asan.

The Lord Faringdon, Lord in Waiting, was present at Heathrow Airport, London, this morning upon the departure of The President of the Federative Republic of Brazil and Senhora Cardoso, and bade farewell to His Excellency and Senhora Cardoso on behalf of The Queen.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
April 21: The Prince of Wales, as President of The Prince of Wales Foundation for Architecture and the Urban Environment, this afternoon held a seminar on urban regeneration and the development of mixed-use communities in towns and cities.

His Royal Highness received members of the Council of the Royal Warrant Holders Association.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
April 21: The Princess Royal, Patron, Sense, this morning visited their Head Office, 11-13 Clifton Terrace, Finsbury Park, London.

Her Royal Highness, President, Save the Children Fund, today attended a Reception for Volunteers at St James's Palace.

The Princess Royal, Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Logistic Corps, this afternoon received Major General Adrian Lyons, Director General Logistic Support (Army), and Brigadier Tony Dalby-Welsh, Director, The Royal Logistic Corps.

Her Royal Highness, Patron, Transaid, later attended a Reception at Railtrack Plc, Railtrack House, Euston Square, London.

The Princess Royal, Past Master, the Worshipful Company of Carmen, this evening attended a Dinner at Plaisterers Hall, London Wall.

KENSINGTON PALACE
April 21: The Duke of Gloucester, Commissioner, English Heritage, today attended a Commissioners' Meeting at Fortress House, Savile Row, London.

The Duke of Gloucester, Grand Prior, the Order of St John, this evening attended a Charity Concert held by the Polish Association of the Order of Malta at the Polish Embassy, Portland Place, London.

The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, BLISS (Baby Life Support Systems), this afternoon opened the Third International Neonatal Nursing Conference at Harrogate International Centre, North Yorkshire, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of North Yorkshire (the Lord Crathorne).

ST JAMES'S PALACE
April 21: The Duke of Kent, Vice-Chairman, British Trade International, this evening attended a Reception for The Philippine British Business Council at Lancaster House, St James's Palace.

Today's birthdays

Mr Leo Abse, former MP, 82; Sir Michael Atiyah, OM, FRS, former president, Royal Society, 70; Sir Christopher Ball, Chancellor, Derby University, 74; Mr Lewis Biggs, director, Tate Gallery, Liverpool, 47; Mr Alan Bond, company chairman and yachtsman, 61; Mr Peter Bowring, former chairman, C.T. Bowring, 76; Mlle Yvette Chauvire, ballerina assoluta, 82; Sir John Chilcot, former civil servant, 60; Mr George Cole, actor, 74; Mr Alan Dukes, former leader of Fine Gael, 54; Lieutenant-General Sir John Foley, 60; Mr Peter Goldstein, joint founder, Superdrug, 59; Mr Lloyd Honeyghan, boxer, 39; Mr Ronald Hynd, choreographer, 68; Mr Robert Key, MP, 54; Mr Nico Ladenis, restaurateur, 65; Mr Geoffrey Marshall, FBA, Provost, The Queen's College, Oxford, 70; Mr Jack Nicholson, actor, director and producer, 62; the Earl of Oxford and Asquith, 83; Miss Margaret Pereira, forensic scientist, 71; Viscount Portman, 65; Sir David Ratford, former diplomat, 65; Miss Jancis Robinson, wine writer and broadcaster, 49; Professor Sir Eric Scowen, physician, 89; Mr Charles H. Sisson, CH, writer and poet, 85; Mr David Summerscale, former Head Master, Westminster School, 62; Sir Robert Wade-Gery, former diplomat, 70.

Today's royal engagements

The Prince of Wales, on behalf of the Queen, will carry out an investiture at Cardiff Castle, at 11.00.

Princess Alexandra, as patron, will visit the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Sick Children, Brighton, East Sussex, at 1.15; will open Partridge House, a long and short-term care centre, Lower Bevendean, at 2.20; and will open the renovated Crowborough War Memorial Hospital, Southview Road, Crowborough, at 3.50.

Lecture

London Goodenough Trust
Baroness Amos delivered the Brigadier Peter Pepper annual memorial lecture to the London Goodenough Trust for Overseas Graduates last night at Mecklenburgh Square.

Admiral Sir William Thomas Pillar

A Service of Thanksgiving for the life and work of Admiral Sir William Thomas Pillar, GBE, KCB, will be held in Bath Abbey at 3.00pm on Monday, July 19, 1999.

Dress for the occasion will be Day Dress (Non Ceremonial) or a Dark Lounge Suit. Those wishing to attend are invited to apply for tickets no later than Monday, May 31, 1999, enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope to Ministry of Defence, Naval Personnel Secretariat 2B3, Room 222, Victory Building, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth, PO1 3LS. Tickets will be despatched on Monday, June 21, 1999. Tickets will be issued on an individual basis and applications must include the full names of all those who wish to attend. Admission to the service will be by ticket only.

Margaret Blyth

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Margaret Blyth, Headmistress of Tudor Hall School from 1969-1983, will be held at 2.30pm on Saturday, May 1, at St Mary's Church, Bloxham. All family, friends and former pupils will be welcome.

ASADOUR GUZELIAN

Gordon Kirby with schizanthus and cineraria he is exhibiting at the Harrogate spring flower show, which opens today

School news

Canford School
The Summer Term began on Monday, April 19. The Summer Open Day will be on Saturday, May 22, between 10am and 4pm.

Canford made the following awards for September 1999, many provided by the Assyrian Frieze Fund.

16+ Awards
S P Covington, M-L V Craven, H Kemlo, H L Mathews, C Ponda, A C Sanderson, C R Spencer, A M Warrington.

13+ Awards
Allenbourn: J L Phipps. All Hallows: K E Roberts. Ballard Lake Prep: G N Musetti, E C Ward. Bournemouth School for Girls: G A Fozard. Castle Court: J E Cullum, E R L Evans, E K Jervis, D D Kinahan, M H Knott, C E Shakespeare, S M G Webb. Clayesmore Prep: R E Collin. Dumpton: A R Batchelor, O J Oduba, L R Sanders, J A Thomasson, J F Wallis. Durlston Court: D H Warren. Forres Sandle Manor: D N C Borner, A McM Marriott. Monkton Combe Jnr: C J Spencer. Mount House: J F Bialick. Northside: H J Suter. The Old Malthouse: M R Lampitt, M E S Tomkins. The Pilgrims': C E A Albin. Port Regis: S C P Baxter, J H Filbey. Prebendal: F C C Fergusson, H W P Fergusson. Twyford: R M Crossley. West Hill Park: T G Cledwyn, C P Martin, O N McLaren.

Culford School
The Summer Term begins today. The Oxbridge Forum is on Friday, May 7, and the Higher Education Conference on Friday, May 14. The 1st XI will play the MCC on Thursday, May 13. Lord Cadogan will present the prizes on Open Day, Saturday, May 22. The Preparatory School Production of *Bugsy Malone* will take place in the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds on Thursday, June 10 - Saturday, June 12. The Summer Ball is on Saturday, July 3, and the Term ends on Wednesday, July 7, with the Preparatory School Prizegiving.

The Portsmouth Grammar School
Term began on April 19. Events in the school's National Year of Reading partnership project include *The Dickens of a City* celebrations on World Book Day, April 23, and a Philosophy and Religious Studies Conference *The Significance of the Book* on May 14, at which speakers include Professor Keith Ward (Christ Church Oxford), Professor William Horbury (Corpus Christi College Cambridge) and Professor Paul Helm (King's College London). The 1st XI play the MCC on June 30 and term ends with Founder's Day on July 9.

Edgehill College, Bideford, Devon
Term began on Tuesday, April 20, with the Commemoration Service at 9.30am led by the College Chaplain, the Rev Peter Brant. The May Ball for Sixth Formers and Parents is to be held on Friday, May 7. The theme of this year's Sixth Form Science Conference, to be held on Friday, June 25, is *Science, an ethical enterprise?* Sports Day is on Saturday, June 26, and the Fête on Saturday, July 10. The College is pleased to welcome Mrs Judith Argent as Head of the Prep Department. The Prep Department Musical this Term is *The Evacuees* and will be performed on June 17. Prep Department Prize Day is on Saturday, July 3. Term ends on Wednesday, July 14.

The Governors are pleased to award the following Scholarships for September 1999.

Prep School
8+ Scholarships: Vanessa Jobson-Scott, Catherine Osgood, Michelle Smith, Jessica Withey.

Senior School
11+ Scholarships: Gavin Barker (Academic), Catherine Brown (Academic), Timothy Bullard (Academic), Rachel Cockburn (Academic), Richard Evans (Music), Sarah Jennings (Academic & Music), Darren Orpen (Sports), Alexander Pirrie (Academic), Margaret Sanders (Academic), Hanna Snead (Sports), Daniel Smith (Academic & Music), Claire Taskis (Academic), Helen Watson (Academic & Music).

11+ Exhibitions: Rachel Haines (Sports), Emma Luxton (Sports), Ian Stewart (Academic).

13+ *Academic Scholarship*: Iain McCormick.

Sixth Form Academic Scholarships: Hannah Arnold, Melissa Auvray, Antonia Burgery, Abigail Derrett, Chloe de Groot, Karen Mott, Frances Martin, Claire Purser, Richie Wong.

Sixth Form Academic Exhibition: Charlotte Cann, Claire Hutchings.

Sixth Form Music Scholarship: Martha Newcombe.

St Leonards School & Sixth Form College
St Katharines School
Term began on April 20 and ends on July 6. The guest speaker at the St Leonards Speech Day will be Rebecca Stephens, the first British woman to climb Everest.

St Leonards Sixth Form College will be co-educational as from September 1999 and St Katharines School is now fully co-educational. The College has three residences known as Ollerenshaw, Bishopshall and The Lodge. Ollerenshaw (formerly the Upper Sixth Form House), has been named after St Leonards President, Dame Kathleen Ollerenshaw. Recent refurbishment of Bishopshall has provided an additional 54 study bedrooms.

The Rev John Murdoch, presently Minister of Glamis, has been appointed Chaplain and will take up his post in September 1999. Dr Angus MacEwan, currently at the United College of the Adriatic in Italy, an International sixth form college, has been appointed Head of Biology and Warden of The Lodge. Dr MacEwan will take up his post in September 1999.

The Dowager Head of the School is Julia Skorupska and the acting Head, Sarah Gordon. The Dowager Captain is Catriona Knight and the acting Captain, Anna Pugh.

Scholarships and Exhibitions for the 1999-2000 session have been awarded as follows:

Sixth Form College Entrance Scholarship - Kate Knox (St Leonards). Sixth Form College Entrance Exhibition - Iona Knight (St Leonards), Lisa Massie (St George's Rome). Entry at 12+ Emily Roff (St Katharines), Christiana Spens (Crail Primary), Emily Ventress (St Katharines). Entry at 13+ Anna Magdalino (New Park), Eugenie Younger (New Park), Helen Cooke (Rockport), Alison Fok (St Leonards). Art Scholarships - Annabella Forbes (Croftinloan), Isla Tulloch (St Leonards). Drama Award - Anna Magdalino (New Park). Sport Scholarship - Maria Milton (St Leonards). Music Scholarship - Mary Erskine (New Park). Music Exhibition - Alexandra Murdoch (Ardvreck). St Katharines Centenary Scholarship - Alexandra Bryant (St Katharines).

The inaugural SLGA St Leonards Under 16s Golf Tournament took place at Drumoig, near St Andrews, on April 8 and 9, 1999.

An Open Day will be held for parents and prospective pupils on Friday, May 21, 1999.

St Mary's School, Calne
The Summer Term begins today with Camilla Buttery continuing as Head Girl. The 125 Appeal for the Swimming Pool and Sports Hall was launched in March and a number of parents' receptions will be held throughout the term. An Open Day for prospective Sixth Form candidates for entry in September 2000 will be held at the School on the morning of Saturday, May 22. Details can be obtained from the Registrar. The Lower Sixth Play *The Visit* by Friedrich Durrenmatt will take place in the Delscey Burns Theatre on May 27 and 28. Founders' Day is on Saturday, June 26, and term ends on Wednesday, July 7.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Henry Fielding, novelist, Sharpham Park, Somerset, 1707; Immanuel Kant, philosopher, Konigsberg, Germany, 1724; Phil May, cartoonist, Wortley, Yorkshire, 1864; Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, Russian revolutionary leader, Simbirsk (Ulyanovsk), 1870; Alexander Kerensky, Prime Minister of Russia, 1917, Simbirsk, 1881; Sergei Prokofiev, composer, Sontsovka, Ukraine, 1891; Vladimir Nabokov, novelist, St Petersburg, 1899; Robert Oppenheimer, physicist and pioneer of the atom bomb, New York, 1904; Kathleen Ferrier, contralto, Higher Walton, Lancashire, 1912.

DEATHS: John Tradescant, traveller and gardener, London, 1662; James Hargreaves, inventor of the spinning jenny, Nottingham, 1778; Thomas Rowlandson, caricaturist, London, 1827; Richard Trevithick, pioneer of the locomotive engine, Dartford, 1833; Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Prime Minister 1905-08, London, 1908; Roy Campbell, poet, Setubal, Portugal, 1957.

Sirius, a British packet steamer, was the first steam-ship to cross the Atlantic to New York from England, 1838.

The British lone yachtsman Robin Knox-Johnston completed his solo non-stop circumnavigation of the world in 312 days, 1969.

£1 coins were introduced into Britain, replacing paper notes, 1983.

Church news

Appointments
The Rev Sue Strutt, Team Vicar, Ledbury (Hereford): to be also Adviser on Women in Ministry (same diocese).
The Rev Martin Webster, Vicar, Nazeing All Saints w St Giles, and Rural Dean of Harlow (Chelmsford): to be Team Rector, Waltham Holy Cross (same diocese).
The Rev Dr Adrian Youngs, Assistant Curate, Dorking St Paul (Guildford): to be Senior Curate, South Croydon Emmanuel (Southwark).

Retirements and resignations
The Rev Peter Beech, Vicar, Latton St Mary (Chelmsford) to retire April 30.
The Rev Philip Mortimer SSC, Vicar, Staincliffe Christ Church (Wakefield) to retire June 30.
The Rev John Fearn, Christian Giving Adviser (Hereford) retired March 2.
The Rev Mary Somervell, NSM, Loppington w Newtown (Lichfield) to retire May 15.

Reception

British Safety Council
Sir Neville Purvis, Director-General of the British Safety Council, was the host at a reception held yesterday at Armourers' Hall for the Council's Diploma in Safety Management, Diploma in Environmental Management and Five Star Health and Safety Management System Audit Awards.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr M.I. Barr and Miss N.J. Bayes
The engagement is announced between Malcolm, son of Mr L. Barr and Mrs A. Burrill, of Yorkshire, and Nicola, daughter of Mr and Mrs David Bayes, of Amersham, Buckinghamshire.

Mr R.A.B. Duff and Miss I.M. Buckley
The engagement is announced between Roderick Alistair Buchanan, son of Mr and Mrs Alistair Duff, of Southwaite, Cumbria, and Isabel Mary, second daughter of Mr and Mrs John Buckley, of Merivale, Masterton, New Zealand.

Mr S.J. Edwards and Miss J.M. Haslam
The engagement is announced between Steven, son of Mr and Mrs John Edwards, of Billingham, and Julie, daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Haslam, of Harrow.

Mr O.J. Farrant and Miss E.C. Bridgeman
The engagement is announced between Oliver, younger son of Mr Malcolm Farrant, of Easton-in-Gordano, North Somerset, and of Mrs David Ireson, of Bathampton, Somerset, and Emma, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Alan Bridgeman, of Plymouth, Devon.

Mr R.J. Gregor and Miss D.M. Long
The engagement is announced between Robert, son of Mr Donald Gregor and the late Mrs Julie Gregor, of Ballina, New South Wales, Australia, and Deborah, daughter of Mr and Mrs Roland Long, of Poole, Dorset.

Mr P.S. Lascelles and Miss C.V. Winlaw
The engagement is announced between Peregrine, younger son of the late Mr Giles Lascelles and of Mrs Giles Lascelles, of Clapham, London, and Victoria, eldest daughter of Mr Antony Winlaw, of Ascott, Warwickshire, and Mrs Carole Winlaw, of Chieveley, Berkshire.

Mr T.J.O. Morgan and Miss R.E. Duncan
The engagement is announced between Tudor, younger son of Mr and Mrs John Morgan, of Porthcawl, Glamorgan, and Rachel, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Angus Duncan, of Emsworth, Hampshire, formerly of Feckenham, Worcestershire.

Mr O. Plunket Greene and Miss B.F. Montagu
The engagement is announced between Orlando, son of Mrs Mary Plunket Greene, and Bona, daughter of the Hon Robert and Mrs Montagu.

Mr M.J. Pocock and Miss S.V. Coe
The engagement is announced between Michael, son of Mr Edward Pocock, of Crockham Hill, Kent, and Mrs June Killick, of Hurst Green, Surrey, and Sarah, daughter of Mr and Mrs Roger Coe, of South Petherton, Somerset.

Mr C.M. Read and Miss S.A. Williams
The engagement is announced between Christopher (Kit), younger son of Mr and Mrs Martin Read, of Barton-upon-Humber, North Lincolnshire, and Sally, daughter of Mr and Mrs Nigel Williams, of Hopton Castle, Shropshire.

Mr A.W. Riley and Miss C.C. Robinson
The engagement is announced between Alan, only son of the late Mr W.A. Riley and of Mrs Riley, of London, and Colleen, only daughter of the late Mr G.M.O. Robinson and of Mrs Robinson, of Bath.

Mr A.F. Wilks and Miss E.C.G. Murfin
The engagement is announced between Andrew, son of Mrs Wilks and the late Mr Guy Wilks, of Leighton Buzzard, and Emma, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Murfin, of Tong Norton, Shropshire.

Marriages

Mr J. Borradaile and Miss C.R. Cox
The marriage took place on Saturday, April 17, at St Peter and St Paul, Broadwell, Gloucestershire, of Mr James Borradaile, son of Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs R.G. Borradaile, of Radlet House, Spaxton, Somerset, and Miss Camilla Rosemary Cox, elder daughter of the late Brigadier Charles Cox and of Mrs Charles Cox, of Broadwell House, Lechlade, Gloucestershire. The Rev Christopher Rawson officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her brother, Major Christopher Cox, was attended by Edwina Cox, Flora Merton, Evangeline Eckersley, Kitty Mayo, Jack Pilkington and Charles Sumption. Mr Jonathan Sumption was best man.

A reception was held at the home of the bride and the honeymoon is being spent abroad.

Mr D.R.B. Thompson and Miss J. Craddock
The marriage took place quietly on March 24, 1999, between Mr Robin Thompson and Miss Jane Craddock.

Dinners

Carmen's Company
The Princess Royal attended the Carmen's Company annual Royal Logistic Corps awards dinner held last night at Plaisterers' Hall. Mr J.A.T. Saywell, Master, presided, assisted by Mr J.M. Silbermann, Senior Warden, and Mr B.H. Owen, Junior Warden.

The Master presented the Carmen's Sword of Honour for 1999 to Lieutenant G.C. Lowth, RLC, and the Royal Logistic Corps Safety Award 1998 to BRAKE for their work in promoting road safety. Brigadier T. Dalby-Welsh, Director of The Royal Logistic Corps, also spoke.

Musicians' Company
Professor Malcolm Troup, Master of the Musicians' Company, presented the company's Silver Medal for services to choral music to Sir David Willcocks at a dinner held last night at Armourers' Hall. The Walter Wilson Cobbett Medal was presented to Mr Richard Sotnick in recognition of his services to chamber music.

Actuaries' Company
Mr Alderman and Sheriff Gavyn Arthur and Mr Sheriff and Mrs Brian Harris were present at the annual dinner of the Actuaries' Company held last night at the Mansion House. Mr A.S. Fishman, Master, assisted by Mr S.J. Green and Mr P.D. Esslemont, Wardens, presided and presented the Sheriffs with a cheque for the Lord Mayor's Appeal for Leuka 2000. Mr Michael Portillo, Mr Arthur and Mr Alan Hall also spoke. The Masters of the Scriveners' and Tobacco Pipe Makers' and Tobacco Blenders' Companies and their ladies were among those present.

1912 Club
Mr Michael Howard, QC, MP, was the guest of honour at a dinner of the 1912 Club held yesterday at the House of Commons, by courtesy of Mr David Amess, MP, chairman of the club. Mrs Felicity Hallwood also spoke.

Meeting

Royal Institute of International Affairs
Ambassador Jacques Paul Klein, Principal Deputy High Representative for Implementation of the Dayton Accords, Sarajevo, was the speaker at a meeting of the Royal Institute of International Affairs held yesterday at Chatham House. Sir David Hannay presided.

Luncheon

Securities Institute
Lord Hurd of Westwell, CH, was the principal guest at a luncheon of the Securities Institute held yesterday at Centurion House, City of London. Mr Graham Ross Russell, chairman, presided.

PERSONAL COLUMN

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

TRADE; 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Psalm 95.1 (AV).

BIRTHS

ALDERSON - On April 20th 1999 to Elizabeth (née Kay) and David, a son, Benjamin Joshua Hugh.

BASTA - On 17th April at The Portland Hospital, to *Portia Kamons and Victor* Basta, a son, Cole Abbon, brother to Max and Eli.

BISHOP - On April 8th in Cambridge, to Samantha and Michael, a daughter, Annabelle Sophie, a sister for Holly.

BROOKS - On Sunday 18th April at The Royal London Hospital, to Tracy and Andy, a daughter, Elizabeth Louisa.

CAREY - On April 20th at The Portland Hospital, to Tasneem (Baten) and Robert, a daughter, Ava, a sister for Riyad.

DIAZ-PINTADO - *On April* 17th at The Portland Hospital, to Margarita Lopez-Chicheri and Olaf, a son, Olaf, our first child. Many kisses to the family.

FOSTER/LIPSHAM - To Melissa Foster and Paul Lipsham, on April 16th, a splendid son, a brother for the enchanting Emily, (born April 30th 1996).

FREEMAN-ATTWOOD - On April 16th in Gobowen, Shropshire, to Emmy, wife of Julian Freeman-Attwood, a daughter, Ivy Antarctica.

BIRTHS

KISSELL - On April 16th at The Portland Hospital, to Susan and Mason, a daughter, Caitlin, a sister *for Bradley* and *Matthew*.

LEE - On Tuesday 20th April to Joseph and Lakmini (née Buluwela), a son, Thomas Arjuna.

NOKES - On April 16th 1999 to Bella (née Colville) and Humphrey, a son, Ben.

RAZAK - On April 12th at The Portland Hospital, to Azlina and Nazir, twins, Arman and Marissa.

SAMOUEL - On 15th April 1999 at St Thomas's Hospital, to Andriana and Andros, a beautiful son, Jack Spyros (7lbs 13oz).

SCHRAGER von ALTISHOFEN - On 16th April 1999, to Nickie and Charles, a daughter, Frederica Leonora Hollyhock, a sister for Vittoria.

WILLIAMS/HONEY - On April 13th, to Rebecca and Christopher, a son, Samuel Elliott Owen. Grateful thanks to the Hammersmith Hospital, especially the IVF Unit.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

MACKENZIE-INGRAM - On 22nd April 1939 at Cape Town Cathedral, Kenneth to Joyce. Now at Oxted.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

FRASER-DORWARD - Douglas and Dorothy April 22nd 1949 at St Gabriel's, Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne. Conducted by the Revd. Tom Wallace.

DEATHS

BEMROSE - Margaret, widow of John and mother of Geoffrey, died peacefully at Highgate Nursing Home *after suffering the effects* of a severe stroke for a year with characteristic dignity and courage. Funeral at 11.00am Friday 30th April, St Marylebone Crematorium. No flowers please. Enquiries and donations (to Eden Hall Hospice, Hampstead in memory of Margaret and John Bemrose) to Cooksey and Sons, 190 Fortis Green Road, London N10. (Phone 0181 883 4844).

BREHENY - On April 19th peacefully at his home in Barsham, Suffolk, after a long illness, John (Jack) Thomas aged 83 years. Loving husband of Betty, dear Dad of Sandra, *Heather and John*, a much loved grandfather and great-grandfather. Loved and remembered always. Funeral Service at St Benet's Minster, Beccles on Wednesday April 28th at 11am, followed by interment in the churchyard. Family flowers only please but donations in lieu *if desired* for "The May Centre" for the disabled at Beccles c/o R. Rivett Ltd., Caxton Road, Beccles, NR34 9DF (01502) 714221.

To place death notices, acknowledgements or notices please call 0171 680 6880

CLIFFE-JONES - Germaine Jeanne on 17th April 1999 aged 98 years. Widow of Jack and mother of the late *Roger. Much loved* mother-in-law, grandmother and great-grandmother. Requiem Mass The Oratory, Edgbaston, Birmingham, Friday 30th April at 12.45pm, followed by private cremation. Family flowers only.

COOPER - Frances (née Price) formerly of Headington, Oxford, widow of Norman, beloved mother of Andrew, Robert and Alison and grandmother of Owain and Yvonne Clare died peacefully on Saturday 17th April 1999 aged 82 years. Funeral Service at St Mary the Virgin, High Street, *Oxford on* Wednesday 28th April at 3 pm. Enquiries to Baker & Sons, Funeral Directors (01367) 240572.

COX - Norman Arthur on 19th April aged 71, dearly beloved husband of Pamela and much loved father of Nigel, Glenda *and Nicholas, a loving* Papa of his grandchildren Paul and Emily. Funeral service on Thursday 29th April at 1.30pm at St John's Church, Buckhurst Hill followed by burial at Chigwell cemetery. Flowers or donations, if desired, to Leukaemia Research Fund, c/o Warriners, 32 Church *Hill*, Loughton, Essex.

CUNLIFFE - Alan W. MBE, died 17th April 1999 aged 85 years. Funeral Service at the West London Crematorium on Friday 23rd April at 4.00pm.

DAY - John R. (Johnny) after a long illness, died peacefully on April 17th. Loved husband of Gaye *and much loved father of* Christopher and proud grandpa of Claire. Funeral at Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead on Tuesday 27th April at 11.30 am. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Cancer Research.

d'OFFAY - Kathleen Mary (née West), formerly wife of T.M.J. d'Offay, mother of Suzanne and Anthony, grandmother of Timothy, Hannah, Sarah, Daniel and Miki, died on April 18th at Midhurst aged 90. Funeral at Chichester Crematorium, West Hampnett Road, Chichester, on Wednesday April 28th at 3.30 pm. Flowers to L.F. Lintott & Son, North Street, Midhurst, tel: (01730) 813264.

GAMMELL - James G.S. Gammell MBE CA *suddenly at home, Foxhall,* Kirkliston on 19th April. Jim Gammell aged 79, darling husband of Sue, loving father of Jamie, Andrew, Jenny, Bill, Patrick and Pete, proud and adored grandfather of thirteen, friend and counsellor to many. Service of Thanksgiving in *St Mary's Cathedral*, Palmerston Place, Edinburgh on Monday 26th April at 11am to which all are welcome. Cremation thereafter private. No flowers please. Donations in lieu to your favourite charity.

GOOCH - On April 19th, Captain Sir John Gooch Bart of Benacre. Beloved brother of Timothy and *Anne and much loved* Uncle. Funeral at St Nicholas Church, Wrentham at 3.00pm on Tuesday 27th April followed by private interment. No flowers please but donations if desired to the Parkinson's Disease Society c/o Fishers Ltd, Funeral Directors, Fieldstyle Road, Southwold, Suffolk.

HALLISSY - Dr Donal (Don), *former GP in West* Bromwich, died suddenly but peacefully in his 85th year at home on April 18th 1999. Dearly beloved father of Rosemary and grandfather *of Antonia* and Christiana. Requiem Mass on Tuesday April 27th at St Augustine's Church, Avenue Road, West Bromwich at 11.15am followed by cremation at West Bromwich Crematorium at 12.30pm.

JESSUP - Sarah May (Maisie), formerly of *Babworth Rectory, died* on 19th April 1999. Dearly loved by her late husband Ted, mother of Rosemary and William, mother-in-law to Jan and grandmother to Amy, Jo, Laurie and Ben. She will be much missed. Funeral Service will be on Monday 26th April at All Saints Church, Babworth, Retford, Notts. at 3 pm. Flowers welcomed or if desired donations to I.T.U., Bassetlaw Hospital c/o E. Hurton & Son Ltd., 73 Grove Street, Retford, DN22 6LA. tel: (01777) 703502.

LAKE - On 19th April, Rosalie Ariel, wife of the late William Lake, much loved mother and *grandmother*. Private cremation. Family flowers only, but donations if desired to the Halliwell Nursing Home, Tunbridge Wells. A service of Thanksgiving will be held at The Church of St John the Baptist, Penshurst on 9th May at 2.30 pm.

LOCHNER - Eleanor Margaret, dear wife of Ludi and much loved member of the Lochner and Lechmere-Oertel families, died peacefully at home on Tuesday April 20th. Funeral Service on Wednesday April 28th at 11 am at Godalming Parish Church. Donations in lieu of flowers to the Meath Home c/o J. Gorringe & Son, 55 Hare Lane, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3EF, tel: (01483) 416403.

LYNN - On April 12th, suddenly at home, Sylvia, aged 84. Dear sister of Mollie. Funeral Service at St Johns Church, Tunbridge Wells, on Wednesday April 28th at 2.30 pm. Donations if wished to Mildmay Mission Hospital at Shoreditch or Venn House, Boyne Park, Tunbridge Wells.

To place death notices, acknowledgements or notices please call 0171 680 6880

MACPHAIL - Mary, peacefully at Marriott House in Chichester on 20th April 1999. Beloved wife of the *late David. Loving* mother of Moira, Kate and Richard, mother-in-law to John, Chris and Maggie and grandmother to Jo, Andrew, Chizzy and Jack. 'A great reader to the end'. Funeral service, Chichester Crematorium Thursday, 29th April at 11.30 am. Family flowers only. Donations for the National Asthma Campaign may be sent to Edward White & Son, 5 South Pallant, Chichester PO19 1SY.

MAIDENS - Alan Roy (1924-1999) on Monday April 19th after a short illness bravely fought. Devoted husband of Pegi, proud father of John, Philip and Louise and father-in-law to Victoria, Sarah-Jane and John, beloved Grandpa (Ba-Ba) to Freddie, Millie and Charlotte. Greatly loved by his family and all who knew him, he will be missed desperately. Funeral to take place on Wednesday April 28th at 3.00pm at St Mark's Church, Church Road, Purley, Surrey followed by a private family cremation. No flowers please. If wished donations toward the Bud Flanagan Leukaemia Ward. Cheques payable to The Royal Marsden Hospital and sent to J B Shakespeare Ltd, 67 George Street, Croydon, CR0 1LD.

PASCOE - Vern, suddenly on 17th April 1999 aged 57. Much loved husband of Jude and father of Lucy and Alice. Funeral service tomorrow, Friday 23rd April at St James' Church, Shere at 3.00pm. No flowers please.

PROCTOR - Colin St. Clair, on April 20th, peacefully at home. Devoted and deeply loved husband of Rosa and adored father of Peter and Paul. Proud and much loved grandfather of Oliver, Philippa, Alexander, Nicholas and Sasha. Funeral service at St James Church, Fulmer on Thursday May 6th at 11.30am. Flowers and enquiries to Arnold *Funeral* Service, 38 Oak End Way, Gerrards Cross. Tel 01753 891892.

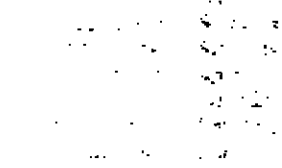
RAVEN - Dame Kathleen Annie, DBE, O.St.J., FRCN, Hon D.Litt., Hon.LL.D., former Chief Nursing *Officer*, Department of Health, widow of Professor John Ingram, died on 19th April 1999, aged 88, in the Acland Hospital, Oxford. Funeral Service at St Peter and St Paul Church, Wingrave, Buckinghamshire on Tuesday, 27th April at 11.30am. *Flowers or, if* desired, donations for The Ronald Raven Trust Fund may be sent to S R Dillamore Ltd., 16 Old Road, Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 7RF. A Memorial Service in London will be arranged at a later date.

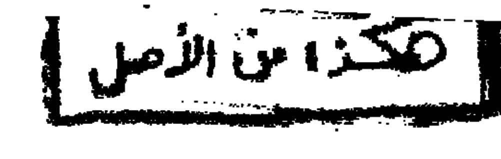
TOWNSEND - John Harvey Knox on April 16th. *Remembered* with much love by Mary, John, Donald, Jon, Desmond, Niall, Margaret, Rose, and also everyone connected with Tower House School. A thanksgiving service will be held at Christchurch, East Sheen on 17th June at 3.00pm. No flowers please, donations to RNIB.

VAUGHAN - Waltham peacefully on 18th April 1999 in Royal South Hants Hospital aged 67 years. Much loved husband of Eleanor. Funeral Service to be held at Southampton Crematorium on Monday 26th April at 3.30 pm. Flowers and enquiries c/o Co-operative Funeral Service, St Mary's Road, Southampton, tel: (01703) 221735.

WALKER - Margaret E.R. (Peggy) on April 17th 1999 aged 97 in a Wincanton N.H. *Widow of Captain* W.B. Walker, Royal Navy. Loved mother of Charmian and Phyllida, grandmother and great-grandmother.

To place death notices, acknowledgements or notices please call 0171 680 6880





OBITUARIES

TIM FORSTER


Forster: permanent pessimism in spite of great success

Tim Forster, OBE, National Hunt trainer, died yesterday aged 65. He was born on February, 27, 1934.

Tim Forster sent out three winners of the Grand National: in 1972 his own horse Well To Do; in 1980 the American-owned and ridden Ben Nevis; and in 1985 the 50-1 chance Last Suspect. He also won almost every other major steeplechase in the calendar, though the Cheltenham and Whitbread Gold Cups eluded him.

But despite all this success, Forster went through life with an air of almost permanent pessimism. How much of this was a genuine indication of his feelings and how much the cautious reaction of a man determined not to get carried away by what might happen was never easy to say. But he would greet even winners with a lugubrious comment.

Racing was in Forster's blood, for his great uncle, Bower Ismay, had owned the disqualified 1913 Derby winner Craganour, and his father Douglas had horses in training on the flat with Jack Waugh and Derrick and Henry Candy. Probably the best of his several winners was Light Harvest, who won the Wokingham Stakes at Royal Ascot in 1956.

Tim Forster's almost inevitable enthusiam for racing was kindled further during his days at Ludgrove and Eton. During his time in the Army he rode his two winners (from only five rides) under rules at Hexham in 1959.

He began training in 1962 after pupil and assistant spells with Geoffrey Brooke and Derrick Candy. Later that year he bought the yard in Letcombe Basset in Oxfordshire where Ron Vibert had briefly trained after the death of the yard's previous encumbent, Tom Yates.

The following year he sent out his first winner, at no less a meeting than the Cheltenham Festival, where Baulking Green won the United Hunts' Cup, a race the horse was to take in the next two seasons as well. For all his tendency to make horrendous mistakes, Baulking Green was one of the star hunter chasers of his day, and he also won the Horse & Hound Cup at Stratford on three occasions.

His first Cheltenham success came in the year before his trainer's second strike at that Festival. In 1964 Take Plenty, ridden by Ron Vibert, won the Mildmay of Flete Chase. Take Plenty was owned by Hugh Sumner, a stalwart supporter of jumping for many years, and his example was followed with equal relish by his son John and daughter-in-law Heather.

Sadly, Mrs Sumner died in 1971 just three days before her father-in-law, but in her will she left instructions that Forster should choose one of her horses to carry his colours. He chose Well To Do, who vindicated his new owner's judgment by galloping through mud and driving rain to win the 1972 Grand National, ridden by Forster's long-serving stable jockey Graham Thorner, to beat the 1970 winner Gray Trip.

In the same year Forster won another Mildmay of Flete Chase with Mocharabuice, whose owner Mrs "Plum" Carew Pole, was a daughter of the one-time senior steward of the Jockey Club, Lord Leverhulme. Forster won Cheltenham's Grand Annual Chase for him with Casbah and was also successful for him at Liverpool with Mr Snowman.

In 1973 the success of Denys Adventure in the Arkle Chase at Cheltenham initiated a notable double for his trainer and his owner Vi Henriques, since they also won the Kim Muir Chase that year with Hinterland. Forster took that amateur riders' race six years later with Redundant Punter.

Forster's second Grand National triumph came in the atrocious conditions of 1980: the race would probably have been called off anywhere else. Of 30 who set off, 21 were standing at halfway but only four finished, as Ben Nevis, ridden by the American amateur Charlie Fenwick, won by 20 lengths at 40-1. He had been well fancied the previous year but ran very badly before being pulled up.

Last Suspect's success at 50-1 in the colours of Arkle's owner, Anne Duchess of Westminster, in 1985, was down very much to the persuasive tongue of the stable jockey Hywel Davies. He talked the Duchess into running the horse, and the moody Last Suspect finished too well for Mr Snugfit and Corbiere.

Forster won the the 1974 Hennessy Gold Cup and the 1976 King George VI Chase with John Sumner's Royal Marshal II. Other big races to come the stable's way during that decade were the Mandarin and Charterhouse Chases, which he won with Master Spy; the Reynoldstown, with Drumadowney, who was fourth in the Cheltenham Gold Cup in that novice season; and the Tingle Creek, with Lefrak City.

His star of the 1980s was Pegwell Bay, who became the first horse to pull off the double of the two big autumn chases at Cheltenham when he won the Mackeson Gold Cup (now the Murphys) and the AF Budge (formerly the Massey-Ferguson and now, after several changes, the Tripleprint) Gold Cup in 1988.

Early in 1994 Forster surprised the racing world by declaring that he was to move for the next season from Letcombe Basset to a yard at Downtown Hall near Ludlow. But any indication that a change of base would be followed by a lower success rate was shown to be mistaken in his very first season at the new yard, when Dublin Flyer won the Tripleprint Gold Cup at Cheltenham and the John Hughes Chase at Liverpool.

The following season Dublin Flyer won the Mackeson at Cheltenham and the injury-prone but very talented Martha's Son included the Victor Chandler and Comet Chases at Ascot among his successes. In 1996-97 Martha's Son proved himself the star of the two-mile chases by taking the Queen Mother Champion Chase at Cheltenham and the Mumm Melling Chase at Liverpool, and there was yet another Cheltenham victory when Maamur won the National Hunt Handicap Chase.

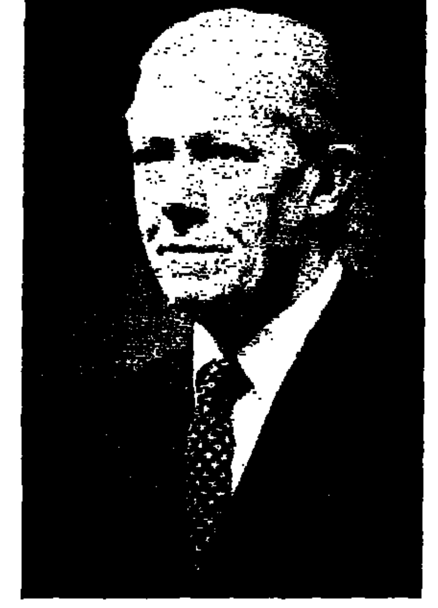
Tim Forster's final major success as a public trainer came in 1998 when Wandering Light won the National Hunt Chase at Cheltenham. Within two months of that victory Forster had decided that he was to retire at the end of that season and train some point-to-point horses at a yard nearby. His assistant Henry Daly took over at Downton.

Forster's 36 years with a licence had made him hugely popular in the steeplechasing world. His modesty and self-mocking humour as he battled against multiple sclerosis and cancer, and his innate pleasure in training brave, and often very able horses, meant that every winner he sent out was hugely popular.

Forster was appointed OBE in the last new year's honours. He never married.

SIR LAURENCE KIRWAN

Sir Laurence Kirwan, KCMG, Director and Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, 1947-75, died on April 16 aged 91. He was born on May 13, 1907.



LAURENCE KIRWAN was known to explorers, travellers and geographers all over the world for both his enthusiasm for scientific exploration and his encouragement of the young. As Director and Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, he took a large part in the selection of its presidents and the shaping of its policy.

Realising that the days of amateur exploration were ending, he introduced a new rigour in the gathering and analysis of scientific evidence of all kinds, as well as overseeing a great increase in commercial sponsorship. He succeeded in bringing together the somewhat disparate interests of explorers and academics, and under his guidance the Royal Geographical Society acted as a broker between British universities and a host of governments and university departments overseas.

Laurence Patrick Kirwan came from an old Galway family, the Kirwans of Cregg. His father, Patrick, was a Shakespearean actor and producer of some note. Larry, as he was always called, was educated at Wimbledon School and at Merton College, Oxford. His academic career at university was undistinguished — but this was due rather to his wealth of other interests than to any absence of talent. He left without a degree, but rectified the omission by taking an Oxford B.Litt. in 1935.

When he came down, his early interest in archaeology led him to contact Sir Flinders Petrie, the Professor of Egyptology at London University, who reinforced an enthusiasm which lasted a lifetime. A season in Egypt working for the British Museum led to his appointment in 1929 as assistant director of the Egyptian Government's archaeological survey of Nubia, undertaken as a preliminary to the raising of the Aswan Dam in 1935.

From 1934 to 1937, Kirwan was field director of Oxford University expeditions to the Sudan, and from 1937 to 1939 he held the Tweedie Fellowship in Archaeology and Anthropology at Edinburgh University, which involved extensive fieldwork. He joined the Territorial Army Reserve of Officers in 1938, and served throughout the Second World War, from 1942 to 1945 on the Joint Staffs, Offices of the Cabinet and Ministry of Defence.

In 1947 he accepted the post of Director and Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, with the support of the President, the traveller and diplomat Lord Rennell. Although his appointment was to prove an outstanding success, it was controversial. Some people, including the Polar veteran Sir James Wordie, were never reconciled to seeing the directorship offered to one outside the specialised coterie dominated for decades by Kirwan's predecessor, the mathematician A. R. Hinks. The staff, too, being accustomed to Hinks's paternalistic rule, were sometimes puzzled by Kirwan's more detached and lofty attitude.

These were, however, small matters compared to the sustained dedication to the society which distinguished his period in office. The expeditions that he helped to establish included an ecological inventory of an area of Kenya led by Richard Leakey and Malcolm Coe, and, subsequently, under Robin Hanbury-Tenison, a survey of Mulu National Park in Malaysia, which led to recommendations for the future management of tropical forests.

Kirwan's time in the Cabinet Offices, at the heart of the British war effort, had familiarised him with the working of government departments and with the ways of the media. The experience stood him in good stead, whether in negotiating subsidies for the RGS map room or in stimulating official and public interest in exploration.

The successful ascent of Everest in 1953 and the crossing of Antarctica in 1957-58 both owed much to Kirwan's work behind the scenes. He never forgot, however, that big projects grow out of little ones, and he gave constant and practical encouragement to student expeditions. He was always more of a historian than a geographer, a bent which showed in his enthusiasm for the cataloguing of the society's manuscripts and relics, and in his history of Polar exploration, *The White Road* in 1959.

Kirwan travelled often, maintaining his archaeological interests and publishing regularly in learned journals. Between 1958 and 1961 he acted as adviser to the Sudanese Government over the imminent flooding of Nubian antiquities by Egypt's High Dam.

His presidency of the British Institute in East Africa took him to Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in the 1960s, and he visited South America in 1966 as leader of the field mission for the court of arbitration in the Argentine-Chile Frontier case, of which he was a member.

His routine was further varied by his appointment in 1968 to the advisory committee on the landscaping of trunk roads. He was appointed CMG in 1958 and KCMG in 1972. On his retirement in 1975 the Royal Geographical Society awarded him its Founder's Medal.

Kirwan was a man of contrasting moods, and one could never be sure which would predominate. Some found him unpredictable, but most were prepared to accept the occasional unmerited snub or disconcerting change of mind for the sake not only of acts of kindness which were equally typical, but because he was excellent company.

He was a splendid raconteur, delighting in the ludicrous and unexpected. About his own disappointments and anxieties he was commendably reticent, and he never bore a grudge.

He was married twice. The first marriage, in 1932, to Joan Chetwynd, was dissolved. Then, in 1942, he married Stella Monck, but she died in 1997. He is survived by the daughter of his first marriage.

DOROTHEA BROOKING

Dorothea Brooking, children's television producer, died on March 23 aged 82. She was born on December 7, 1916.

Dorothea Brooking rehearsing with penguin puppets for a television show in 1952

ONE of a generation of forceful, independent women who helped to shape the BBC after the war, Dorothea Brooking was the producer behind a succession of serialisations on children's television from the 1950s into the 1970s. Her best work included *The Railway Children* and three versions of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*.

Her adaptations were notably true to the spirit of the originals, and her casting gave breaks to several young talents. Prunella Scales took the part of Martha, the Yorkshire maid, in her second *Secret Garden*; Susan Hampshire played Katy the New England tomboy in *What Katy Did*; and Richard O'Callaghan was Little Lord Fauntleroy.

Dorothea Brooking had originally wanted to be an actress, and trained at the Old Vic in its glory days in the 1930s. She worked there in repertory — playing "tall juveniles" such as Viola in *Twelfth Night* — almost up to the outbreak of war, when she joined the Ministry of Information. In the meantime she had married the actor John Franklin, with whom she had a son.

While Franklin was away in Africa, she was sent to China, where she was attached to the British Embassy in Shanghai (and found time to act in *Richard II*). She worked in the office of the press attaché, which ran a radio station, and there she began writing and producing. She was in the middle of producing a serial thriller for the station when the Japanese forced the British to leave, and wryly reflected that she never knew how it would have ended.

When she returned to England in 1943, she joined the BBC's European Service as a continuity announcer.

After the war she remained with the corporation, and in 1950 she was recruited for the new *Children's Hour* on television. "They asked me when I was interviewed what I would like to do for children," she recalled. "I said I would like to serialise some of the best loved children's stories. 'Name two,' they said." So she suggested *The Railway Children* and *The Secret Garden*, which were to be her first adaptations. The part of Martha in *The Secret Garden* in 1951 was played by Billie Whitelaw.

Brooking enjoyed working with children — "they are so professional" — and took particular care to see that her young actors understood every line they had to speak. The success of these early serials set the standard for children's weekly television, and Brooking went on to produce *Great Expectations*, *Thursday's Child*, *Little Women*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper* and several others over the next two decades.

A tough, self-possessed woman, she took the job seriously, feeling a responsibility both to the authors whose work she adapted and to her viewers, and she was concerned, in later years, about the blunting of sensibilities by screen violence and horror. Occasionally, over the years, she returned to the theatre, spending short spells in repertory. She also wrote some radio plays under the pen name Darrell Wilde.

At the end of the 1960s, the BBC's provision for children changed, and for six years Brooking moved into the schools programming. But in 1974 she returned to her old patch by remaking *The Treasure Seekers*, and the following year she dramatised *The Secret Garden* for the third time.

Having divorced in 1951, she moved in the early 1960s to live with Wilfred Synge at Nutley in Sussex. His wife refused a divorce, however, so Brooking changed her name by deed poll to placate the village. A wedding was finally arranged for 1971, but Synge died two weeks before it was due to take place.

Brooking formally retired from the BBC at the end of the 1970s, but continued to work there as a freelance — on children's and historical programmes — until the mid 1980s.

She is survived by her son.

HERO DE RANCE

Hero de Rance, pianist and songwriter, died on April 11, aged 99. She was born on July 21, 1899.

FOR more than 50 years, West End theatregoers were entertained during their intervals by a bubbly red-headed pianist. Seated in the orchestra pit, Hero de Rance would tinkle out melodies by stalwarts such as Ivor Novello and Noël Coward while patrons enjoyed their coffees and ice creams.

She played in every London theatre except the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and actors asked in their contracts for her to play at their shows because she had a reputation for bringing good luck. Audiences recognising her red hair would give her a round of applause.

Named Hero by her mother after the character in *Much Ado About Nothing*, she started in variety at the age of ten and often appeared on stage with her sister. She worked as a "plugger" for other people's songs and eventually her own.

Her best known composition was *You're Mine*, written in 1937 to words by Bruce Sevier and featured by the Austrian tenor Richard Tauber. It became her theme song and during the Second World War she played it to the troops.

She provided piano accompaniment for silent films before settling into her main career as a theatre pianist and composer. She continued to visit film studios, however, to sell her songs. When she started playing in theatres she was only one of several pianists in the West End, but after the death of her main rival, Clarry Ashton, in the early 1970s, she had the field to herself. She continued to play in theatres, and in the restaurant at the Ritz Hotel until about ten years ago.

Throughout her life she was determined to help fellow composers to protect their work. She joined the Performing Right Society in 1926 and was still attending its annual general meetings in her nineties. Until recently she represented the society at the funerals of showbusiness personalities.

She was also one of the original council members of the Songwriters' Guild of Great Britain, now the British Academy of Composers and Songwriters. It was formed in 1947 by a group of composers aggrieved that their songs were not getting fair exposure on the BBC.

Her husband predeceased her and she had a daughter.

PERSONAL COLUMN

DEATHS

WELDON - Diana Geraldine, née Anderson, of Wickwar. Peacefully at home on 20th April. Funeral Service at Holy Trinity Church, Wickwar on Saturday 24th April at 12.30 pm, followed by private cremation. Family flowers only, donations in lieu may be sent for the Macmillan Nurses c/o Grimes & Goscombe Funeral Services, Chipping Manor, The Chipping, Wotton under Edge, Glos.

WILKES - Desmond John LLB. TD. Peacefully, April 18th aged 79, formerly Home Office, and Major, Royal Engineers (Burma Star). Funeral April 28th, St George's, Hanworth 11am. Donations for St Christophers Hospice, Sydenham, to undertakers Lodge Bros., 108 High Street, Feltham, Middx. TW13 4EX.

THANKSGIVING SERVICES

BARRETT - A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of John H. Barrett will be held on July 22nd 1999 at St James's Church at 11am, followed by interment of his ashes. Light lunch at Dale Fort at 12.15 pm. Donations gratefully received for Dale Church.

MARDEN - A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of John Marden will be held at St Mary Abbots Church, Kensington High Street, on Tuesday 25th May at 12.30 pm.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

TINKO - Toujours ta Bheer.

BIRTHDAYS

ROBERTS - Andrew. Happy 40th Birthday. All our love, Sarah and Ben. XXXX

TODAY you came among us, everything that touches us binds us together, like one stroke of the bow, which draws one voice out of two strings. (R.M. Rilke).

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ON THIS DAY

April 22, 1911

Exotic feathers and furs no longer adorn women's coats, but threats to more ordinary birds from other dangers still exist.

THE PLUMAGE BILL.

To the Editor of The Times

Sir, — Those who attack the Plumage Bill on behalf of the interests of certain trades connected almost entirely with millinery and the costume of very wealthy women are surely the defenders of a hopelessly lost cause. The point seems to me to be a very simple one. What are these egret plumes, these Birds of Paradise, rare kingfishers, lyre birds, argus pheasant quills, and other trophies required for? Essential operations in chemistry? In medicine, in preparation of food-stuffs, and other processes vital to the welfare of humanity? No; nothing but the satisfaction of a Palaeolithic instinct in women of little education and possibly depraved minds, who with motives no better than the baboon or the magpie seek to clutch at strange and gaudy objects to stick them about their persons. You will never find a really refined and educated woman in any society wearing Birds of Paradise plumes, or similar spoils of an ignoble chase, in her headgear. That woman and man may desire to dress beautifully is an understandable and wholesome instinct, and that plumes and feathers play a great part in such decorations no one can deny. But all that is wanted in this respect can be supplied to the full by the domesticated ostrich, by the domestic goose, fowl, duck, pigeon, peacock, turkey, Guinea fowl, and other birds kept in aviaries or in the poultry-yard; while as regards wild birds which are preserved for food purposes, such as the various forms of wild duck (provided they are preserved), snipe and woodcock, of pheasant, partridge, and grouse, no objection is raised to the use of their plumage for any purpose, or to the eating of their bodies. But no specious arguments should be allowed for one day longer to stand in the way of the preservation of all birds all over the globe, except the two or three species actually proved to be harmful to the interests of man. When will it be realized that in killing birds we are playing a losing game in our terrible struggle with the insect class? The notion is ceasing to become fantastic that the undoubted increase of the tse-tse fly is perhaps a corollary of the work of the plumage hunters in French West Africa, Belgian, German, and British Tropical Africa. The whole question of the reasonable preservation of fauna and flora demands the three years work of an expert commission; but meantime this Plumage Bill may do something to stay the vile and wholly inexcusable slaughter of beautiful and innocent birds.

I am your obedient servant,

H. JOHNSTON.

THE TIMES TODAY

NEWS

School massacre for Hitler

■ An anguished America grappled with the worst schoolyard massacre in its history, which left 15 dead and 16 injured. Two high school outcasts, members of the Trenchcoat Mafia gang, obsessed with Shock Rock and Nazi paraphenalia, chose the 110th anniversary of Hitler's birth to slaughter their most popular classmates with bullets and bombs.......Pages 1-5

Blair hints at ground war

■ Increasing expectations that Nato ground troops could be sent into Kosovo before President Milosevic signs a peace deal were heightened by Tony Blair and the US Government. The Prime Minister flew to Washington for talks with President Clinton having indicated to the House of Commons before he left that a land force may be used against a "degraded" Serbian war machine.......Pages 1, 17-20

Charity crisis

Charities are spending thousands of pounds buying access to confidential lists of millionaires in an attempt to reverse the decline in individual giving.......Page 6

Silcott campaign

A leading member of the campaign to secure Winston Silcott's freedom, who has accused the police of racially harassing him, has another reason why officers might regard him in an unfavourable light.......Page 8

Airline warning

Airlines issued a warning of "chaos and catastrophe" across Europe this summer as they accused the international air traffic control service of causing huge delays.......Page 10

Row in ward

Relatives of a profoundly disabled boy became involved in a violent dispute on a children's hospital ward when told that he should be allowed to die, a court was told. Doctors and police were injured in the fracas.......Page 11

Blair's ambition

Tony Blair questioned the assumption that he would one day serve under Gordon Brown several months before the death of John Smith in May 1994. In *Mandelson: The Biography*, Donald Macintyre writes of a Sunday walk in the park.......Page 13

Dewar's anguish

The Secretary of State for Scotland looks as if he has just committed a most terrible deed. Donald Dewar is ashen-faced and his big hands are covered in a blood-red liquid but he has something much more serious than murder in mind.......Page 14

Teenager 'tortured'

Five young men and women systematically tortured a "generous and vulnerable" teenager to death over six days, a court was told. During last year's Easter holiday Angela Pearce, 18, a schizophrenic, was lured to a flat to be robbed, but the gang decided to keep her captive.......Page 15

Nuclear theft

American security was seriously damaged by the Chinese theft of designs for the most sophisticated nuclear warhead in the US armoury, according to a damning CIA report. It comes after a series of allegations that Chinese spies penetrated nuclear weapons laboratories in the 1980s.......Page 21

Space holidays

Pack up your moon boots and head for the stars. According to the European Space Agency holidaymakers may be able to take trips into space in the near future and stay in hotels orbiting the Earth. Holidays on the moon should be feasible by the middle of the next century.......Page 21

Queen is the toast of Korea

■ The Queen celebrated her 73rd birthday with a trip to the countryside, a glass of rice wine, an armful of trinkets and an airline lunch of cold beef. Like most women her age, she said she didn't want a fuss. But she did not escape entirely scot-free. At a concert in Seoul Lesley Garrett and a choir of Korean schoolchildren, sang *Happy Birthday*.......Page 9



Rosemary Harris, curator of the NatWest art collection at the Louthbury Gallery, with an entry in the Young Artists competition

Inflation risk: Wage growth unexpectedly went higher in February sparking City fears that the Bank of England will now call a halt to its rate cutting spree.......Page 29

Final frontier: After stamping his flag on everything from pensions to pop music, Richard Branson is poised to take Virgin into space tourism.......Page 29

VAT ruling: The Treasury was handed a bloody nose by the courts when a provision in last month's Budget, worth more than £100 million a year in VAT, was ruled to contravene European Law.......Page 29

Markets: The FTSE 100 index fell 8.8 to 6311.0. The pound fell 0.96 cents to $1.6065 and 0.09p against the euro to 66.03p. The index fell to 103.8 from 104.0.......Page 32

Football: Chelsea must produce one of their best performances of the season tonight in order to overcome Real Mallorca and qualify for their second successive Cup Winners' Cup final.......Page 53

Cricket: Javed Miandad has resigned as coach of the Pakistan team just three weeks before the start of the World Cup.......Page 49

Snooker: Steve Davis, the former world champion, staged a magnificent fightback but was beaten on the final black by Joe Perry in the Embassy World Championship in Sheffield.......Page 50

Tennis: Greg Rusedski followed Tim Henman out of the Monte Carlo Open when he was beaten by Jiri Novak.......Page 53

Cinema 1: In a busy week for new releases, James Christopher reviews the Nicolas Cage thriller *8mm* and Kevin Costner's tearjerker, *Message in a Bottle*.......Page 38

Cinema 2: At the age of 54 the British actress Jacqueline Bisset has landed a plum role in the period drama *The Honest Courtesan* — thanks, she says today, to her positive attitude.......Page 39

Stratford tales: The Royal Shakespeare Company stages Ted Hughes's *Tales from Ovid* in a daunting illustration of the intensity of human passion.......Page 40

Creative duet: When Benjamin Britten met W.H. Auden in 1935, a relationship began which was to culminate in the opera *Paul Bunyan*.......Page 41

Green nappies: Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on an eco-friendly alternative for baby's disposables, and on John Diamond's battle. Page 22

Gift of the gab: Erica Wagner meets Ben Haggarty, a modern master storyteller.......Page 23

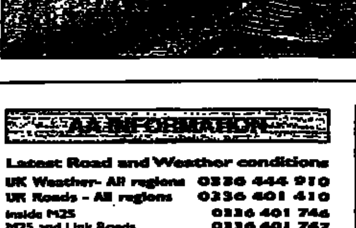
Late bargains: From photography in the Lake District to cruising around Greek islands.......Page 37

Caged mind: Brian Keenan on the kidnap ordeal of Jan Philipp Reemtsma; Roy Jenkins on Dean Acheson.......Page 42

Flower seller: Amanda Craig reviews Deborah Moggach's novel *Tulip Fever*; Erica Wagner on a powerful tale of love and vengeance from Andrew Greig.......Page 43

Beyond Brideshead: Debunking Oxford and Cambridge as homes for the privileged.......Page 44

A school is supposed to be a place of security, yet once again America has witnessed a violent rampage on school grounds. It is shocking to review the long list of school shootings in the past two years. We don't know what the explanation is.
— *Denver Rocky Mountain News*



TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ **EDUCATION**
Catching them young: how inner-city schools have cut crime

■ **MEDIA**
Raymond Snoddy on why Greg Dyke deserves a chance to compete for the BBC's top job

Preview: *Aussie Birds:* documentary about the Australian pelican (Channel 5, 7.30pm). **Review:** Joe Joseph is astonished that the BBC broadcast ball-by-ball snooker on radio.......Pages 54, 55

Democracy in danger

Montenegro, a proud and tolerant republic which has valiantly tried to stay neutral in the new Balkan war, is at grave risk of being torn apart. If Nato has "plans to stop" Belgrade destroying it, *it had better* dust them down.......Page 25

Arms and the boys

the American Congress will studiously avoid any serious constraints on gun ownership and focus instead on the supposed influence of the Internet.......Page 25

It's a bug's world

A Web of Life display at London Zoo celebrates the loveliness, intricacy and diversity of the world's invertebrates.......Page 25

ANATOLE KALETSKY

The great global economic crisis, which started in Thailand and Indonesia nearly two years ago and reached its apogee last summer with the financial collapse in Russia, was one of the luckiest breaks that Bill Clinton and Tony Blair ever had.......Page 22

MAGNUS LINKLATER

It is hard to do other than weep for the children of the Columbine High School, massacred for no better reason than that there was an easy target for ungoverned hatred.......Page 22

JOHN LAUGHLAND

The war is being fought to destroy the very principles which constitute the West. To behave as if this were not so is not moral: it is megalomaniac.......Page 22

Tim Forster, National Hunt trainer; **Sir Laurence Kirwan**, Royal Geographical Society; **Dorothea Brooking**, Children's TV producer; **Hero de Rance**, pianist.......Page 26

Arms decommissioning; Lords' reform; bombs on Serbia; Gordon Brown as "defender of Britain"; repairing listed buildings; memories of Margaret Thatcher.......Page 25

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,084

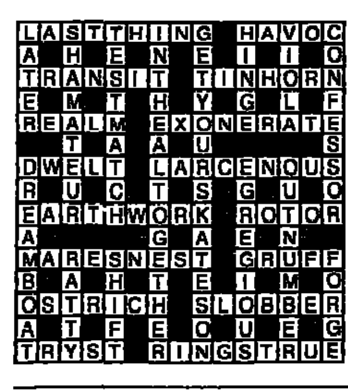
ACROSS

1 Idea that's incomplete, however (6).
5 Terrible weapon to fire at disorderly mob repeatedly (4.4).
9 Importing staple food proved oddly expensive (10).
10 Game you reportedly found in old-fashioned case (4).
11 Defoe's character as seen in part of Europe (8).
12 One English novelist or another abridged (6).
13 Lighter domestic animal put on second (4).
15 18 in a state (8).
18 Merchandise with method? Well done! (4.4).
19 Spy chain (4).
21 Very large flower worshipped by ancient Egyptians (6).
23 Corresponding part of some vital error reversed (8).
25 A number of Germans were dishonest (4).
26 Where those who serve drinks are placed inside (6.4).
27 Type that's trapped in ooze that's shallow (4-4).
28 The short form of 23's argument (6).

DOWN

2 In South coast resort, left substandard accommodation (5).
3 Frenchman, in single case, lacking refreshment (9).
4 Gym equipment for runners in field (6).
5 Relatively old form of religion? (8-7).
6 Quaint archaism left in (3-5).
7 Half-heartedly shout downstairs (5).
8 Among ordinary people, Dick is the entrepreneur (9).
14 Singularly useless product for the Japanese consumer (9).
16 Husband, somewhat expert, providing good living? (9).
17 Church fitted us up within ecclesiastical garb (8).
20 Aircraft, on time, coming to earth (6).
22 Staff joined by popular French master (5).
24 Prolific scorer's off-drive (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 21,083



□ We apologise for errors in yesterday's solution grid. Correct answers should have read: Across - (5) wind-up, (26) the same old story, (28) oxidiser; Down - (25) phlox.

Times Two Crossword, page 56

TIMES NEWSPAPERS LIMITED, 1999. Published and printed and licensed for distribution in electronic and all other derivative forms by Times Newspapers Ltd, PO Box 495, Virginia Street, London E1 9XN, telephone 0171-782 5000 and also printed at Knilling Road, Prescot, Merseyside, L34 9HN, telephone 0151-546 5000. Thursday, April 22, 1999. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.

AA INFORMATION

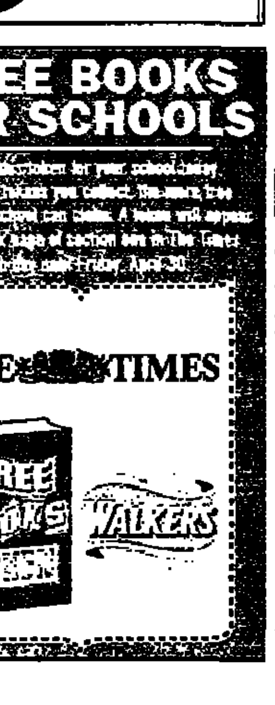
HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 5.51 am
Sun sets: 8.08 pm
Moon sets: 2.19 am
Moon rises: 11.15 am

First quarter today

London 8.08 pm to 5.49 am
Bristol 8.18 pm to 5.59 am
Edinburgh 8.33 pm to 5.49 am
Manchester 8.22 pm to 5.52 am
Penzance 8.26 pm to 6.14 am





FORECAST

□ **General:** it will be another blustery day, but it will be reasonably mild with a few sunny spells, the best of these across eastern England and East Anglia. Much of England and Wales will have showers, especially in the west. Northern Ireland and south-west Scotland will be mostly cloudy with showery rain, but north-west Scotland should see sunny spells. Eastern Scotland will be mostly dry, but it will feel cool along the coast.

Tonight, Scotland and Northern Ireland will remain wet and windy. Wales and western England will be cloudy with a some showers likely, continuing breezy in the north. Eastern and SE England will have clear breaks.

□ **London, SE England, E Anglia, E Midlands, EEngland, Central N, NE England:** mild with sunny spells but breezy with increasing chance of showers. Max 16C (61F).

□ **Central S England, W Midlands, Channel Islands:** a few sunny spells, but breezy with showers breaking out. Fresh south-westerly. Max 15C (59F).

□ **SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** breezy with limited sun and some heavy showers. A moderate to fresh south-westerly. Max 14C (57F).

□ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll:** mainly cloudy with spells of heavy rain. A moderate south-westerly. Max 12C (54F).

□ **Aberdeen, Moray Firth, N E Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** rather cloudy but largely dry. Max 12C (54F).

□ **NW Scotland:** sunny spells and one or two showers. Max 11C (52F).

□ **N Ireland:** mostly dull and cloudy with showery rain. Max 12C (54F).

□ **Republic of Ireland:** sunny spells, developing showers. Max 14C (57F)

□ **Outlook:** Scotland and N Ireland will have more rain on Friday. England and Wales will have sun and isolated showers. Saturday will be mainly dry but rain will move into Northern Ireland, Wales and western England.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm. b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, ds=dust storm, du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog, g=gales, h=hail, r=rain, sh=shower; sl=sleet s=sun, t=thunder

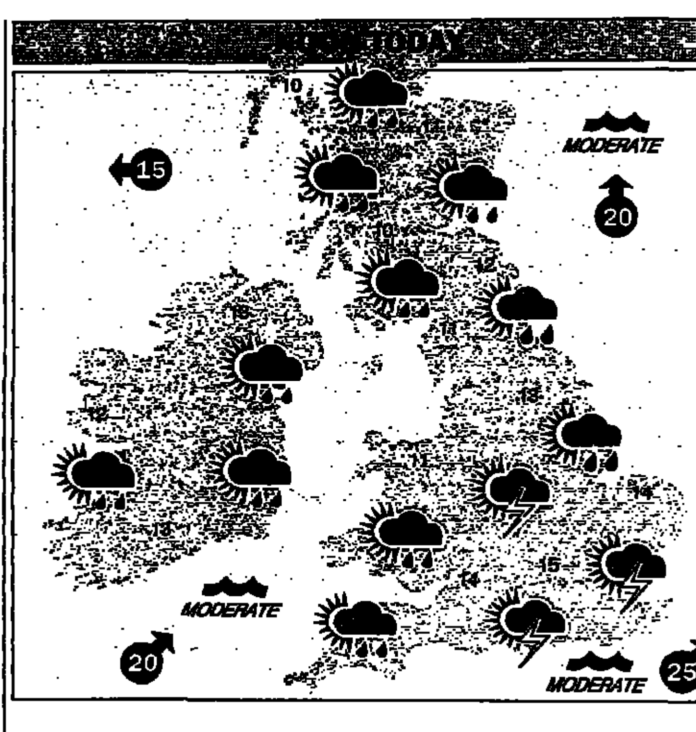
	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	5.1	0.80	11	52	c	Kinloss	2.5	0.02	13	55	b
Anglesey	1.3	0.28	11	52	r	Leeds	3.1	0.15	15	59	c
Aspatria	0.9	0.14	12	54	r	Lerwick	2.7	0.60	6	43	r
Aviemore	0.9	0.03	11	52	sh	Leuchars	4.3	0.64	12	54	sh
Belfast	0.5	0.23	12	54	r	Littlehampton	5.4	0.11	14	57	s
Birmingham	1.9	0.23	13	55	sh	London	4.9	0.17	15	59	sh
Bognor R	6.6	0.12	13	55	sh	Lowestoft	9.2	0.19	14	57	b
Bournemth	4.2	0.22	13	55	sh	Manchester	1.1	0.15	13	55	sh
Bristol	2.8	0.13	13	55	sh	Margate	9.6	0.15	15	59	s
Buxton	0.2	0.40	11	52	c	Morecambe	-	0.25	14	57	r
Cardiff	1.6	0.05	12	54	sh	Newcastle	5.6	0.25	15	59	s
Clacton	9.5	0.12	12	54	s	Newquay	0.9	0.10	11	52	sh
Colwyn Bay	0.1	0.59	13	55	r	Norwich	8.2	0.19	15	59	b
Cromer	7.8	0.24	15	59	s	Oxford	4.4	0.13	13	55	sh
Eastbourne	5.4	0.55	14	57	sh	Penzance	3.7	0.10	14	57	sh
Edinburgh	2.7	0.12	15	59	sh	Poole	-	0.22	14	57	r
Eskdalemuir	-	0.39	11	52	r	Prestatyn	1.3	0.35	13	55	sh
Exmouth	0.8	0.26	13	55	sh	Ross on Wye	1.5	0.37	13	55	r
Fishguard	0.6	0.27	10	50	r	Saunton Sands	1.8	0.12	11	52	sh
Folkestone	5.8	0.24	14	57	b	Scarborough	7.1	0.37	14	57	b
Glasgow	0.1	0.38	13	55	r	Shrewsbury	2.3	0.13	13	55	sh
Guernsey	6.6	0.15	16	61	s	Southport	X	0.18	13	55	r
Hastings	4.4	0.17	13	55	b	Stornoway	1.2	0.31	12	54	r
Hayling I.	5.8	0.13	13	55	sh	Swanage	3.9	0.17	13	55	sh
Herne Bay	6.6	0.17	16	61	s	Teignmouth	2.0	0.40	13	55	sh
Hunstanton	4.5	0.24	15	59	sh	Tenby	-	0.26	12	54	sh
Isle of Man	-	0.43	10	50	r	Tiree	-	0.34	11	52	sh
Isle of Wight	6.2	0.25	13	55	s	Torquay	1.3	0.12	13	55	sh
Jersey	6.1	0.06	14	57	s	Weymouth	4.7	0.09	12	54	sh

ABROAD

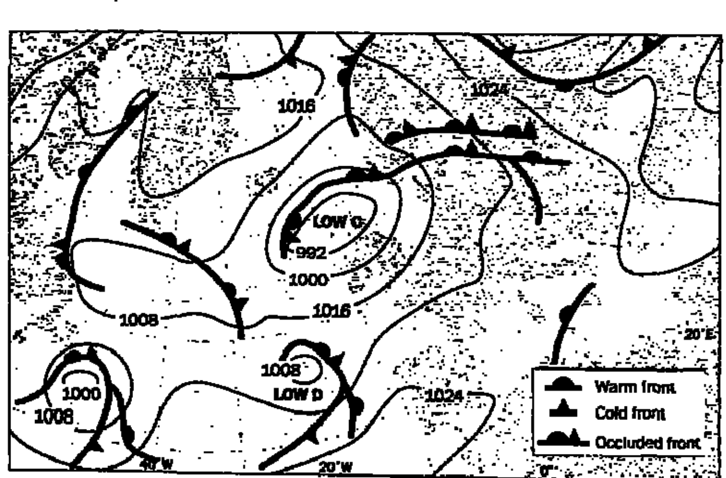
	C	F			C	F			C	F			C	F	
Ajaccio	16	61	f	Cologne	12	54	s	Madrid	17	63	f	Rome	15	59	f
Akrotiri	19	66	s	C'phagn	8	46	s	Majorca	19	66	s	Salzburg	10	50	s
Alex'dria	21	70	f	Corfu	15	59	f	Malaga	19	66	s	S Frisco	12	54	s
Algiers	22	72	s	Dublin	9	48	d	Malta	19	66	s	Santiago	16	61	s
Amst'dm	12	54	f	Dubrovnik	14	57	f	Melbourne	X	X	X	S Paulo	X		
Athens	20	68	s	Faro	18	64	f	Mexico C	22	72	s	Seoul	24	75	s
Bahrain	30	86	s	Florence	12	54	r	Miami	26	79	s	Singapore	31	88	f
Bangkok	35	95	f	Frankfurt	12	54	f	Milan	16	61	f	Stockholm	12	54	s
Barbados	X			Funchal	20	68	f	Montreal	13	55	s	Strasb'rg	12	54	f
Barcelona	18	64	f	Geneva	8	46	c	Moscow	18	64	s	Sydney	25	77	s
Beijing	13	55	c	Gibraltar	24	75	s	Munich	9	48	f	Tangier	21	70	s
Beirut	19	66	f	Helsinki	19	66	s	Nairobi	26	79	s	Tel Aviv	23	73	f
Belgrade	10	50	c	Hong K	25	77	c	Naples	16	61	c	Tenerife	23	73	s
Berlin	11	52	s	Innsbruck	12	54	s	N Delhi	38	100	s	Tokyo	23	73	s
Bermuda	19	66	f	Istanbul	17	63	s	N York	7	45	r	Toronto	11	52	f
Biarritz	20	68	s	Jeddah	38	100	s	Nice	15	59	f	Tunis	24	75	s
Bordeaux	17	63	r	Jo'burg	25	77	s	Oslo	5	41	sh	Valencia	27	81	s
Brussels	11	52	c	L Palmas	22	72	s	Paris	11	52	d	Vanc'ver	8	46	r
Budapest	12	54	f	Le Touquet	10	50	f	Perth	X	X	X	Venice	13	55	s
B Aires	23	73	s	Lisbon	17	63	c	Prague	9	48	f	Vienna	9	48	r
Cairo	25	77	s	Locarno	11	52	f	Reykjavik	5	41	s	Warsaw	3	37	r
Cape Tn	19	66	f	L Angeles	21	70	s	Rhodes	19	66	s	Wash'ton	13	55	f
Chicago	13	55	f	Luxembg	10	50	f	Rio de J	23	73	f	Wellington	17	63	X
Ch'church	17	63	X	Luxor	41	106	s	Riyadh	34	93	s	Zurich	10	50	s

Temperatures at midday local time Tuesday X - not available

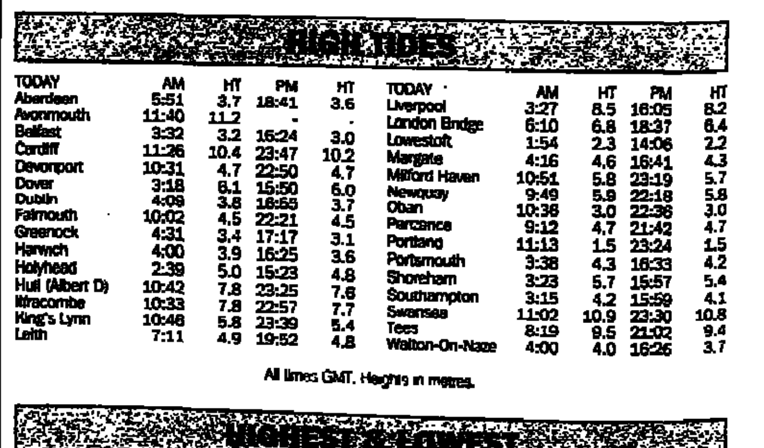
NOON TODAY



Changes to the chart below from noon: Low C will remain slow moving, with little change in central pressure, while Low D deepens and runs northeast



HIGH TIDES



TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT	TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	5:51	3.7	18:41	3.6	Liverpool	3:27	8.5	16:05	8.2
Avonmouth	11:40	11.2	-	-	London Bridge	6:10	6.8	18:37	6.4
Belfast	3:32	3.2	16:24	3.0	Lowestoft	1:54	2.3	14:06	2.2
Cardiff	11:26	10.4	23:47	10.2	Margate	4:16	4.6	16:41	4.3
Devonport	10:31	4.7	22:50	4.7	Milford Haven	10:51	5.8	23:19	5.7
Dover	3:18	6.1	15:50	6.0	Newquay	9:49	5.9	22:18	5.8
Dublin	4:09	3.8	16:55	3.7	Oban	10:38	3.0	22:38	3.0
Falmouth	10:02	4.5	22:21	4.5	Penzance	9:12	4.7	21:42	4.7
Greenock	4:31	3.4	17:17	3.1	Portland	11:13	1.5	23:24	1.5
Harwich	4:00	3.9	16:25	3.6	Portsmouth	3:38	4.3	16:33	4.2
Holyhead	2:39	5.0	15:23	4.8	Shoreham	3:23	5.7	15:57	5.4
Hull (Albert D)	10:42	7.8	23:25	7.6	Southampton	3:15	4.2	15:59	4.1
Ilfracombe	10:33	7.8	22:57	7.7	Swansea	11:02	10.9	23:30	10.8
King's Lynn	10:46	5.8	23:39	5.4	Tees	8:19	9.5	21:02	9.4
Leith	7:11	4.9	19:52	4.8	Walton-On-Naze	4:00	4.0	16:26	3.7

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: highest day temp: Gravesend (Kent) 16C (61F); **lowest day max:** Baltasound (Shetland) 06C (43F); **highest rainfall:** Capel Curig (Gwynedd) 1.25ins; **highest sunshine:** Margate (Kent) 9.6hrs.

Bisset in role revival
Arts, page 39

هكذا من الأصل

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THE TIMES

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Britten's duet with Auden
Arts, page 41

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY APRIL 22 1999

Pay rises put further rate cuts in doubt

By Alasdair Murray, Economics Correspondent

WAGE growth unexpectedly spiked higher in February sparking City fears that the Bank of England will call a halt to its rate-cutting spree.

However, a series of revisions and the introduction of a new bonus measurement raised fresh doubts about the accuracy of the data, which was reinstated only last month after a four-month suspension.

Faint hopes that the Bank would still drive rates lower were also kept alive by the separate unemployment data, which showed another small rise in joblessness.

The minutes of the April Monetary Policy Committee revealed that at the last meeting the Bank was still inclined towards further cuts, with all nine members of the committee in favour of a reduction.

The annual increase in average earnings ticked up to 4.6 per cent in the three months to February from an upwardly revised 4.5 per cent in January.

There was also a sharp jump in the monthly measure of earnings, with wage growth in February some 5.0 per cent higher than a year earlier. The figure confounded City expectations of a 4.1 per cent increase and was well above the 4.5 per cent that the Bank of England has repeatedly said is the maximum level compatible with its inflation target.

Some City analysts seized on the data as evidence that rates are now set to remain on hold while the Treasury implored workers to practise wage restraint. John O'Sullivan, UK economist at Greenwich NatWest, said: "It will now be very difficult for the MPC to persuade itself of the case for a further rate cut in May."

However, other economists emphasised that the sharp revisions to the January data, with growth revised from 4.2 per cent to 4.5 per cent, and a change in the method of measuring bonuses made it impossible to determine the validity of the figures. The rise in overall average earnings is in stark contrast to separate survey evidence showing wage growth easing in recent months.

The Office for National Statistics blamed the "exceptional" revisions on an unusually high level of late corporate returns. It added that while the new bonus measure, which has been modified to incorporate all bonus payments, made direct comparisons difficult, it had no impact on the overall earnings growth figures. Bonuses constituted about 1.3 per cent of the total rise in February average earnings.

Robin Marris, Emeritus Professor of Economics at Birkbeck College and a fierce critic of the Bank's treatment of the data, said: "The discontinuity in the figures makes it impossible to draw any accurate conclusions."

The separate unemployment data showed the claimant count measure rising by a modest 2,000 in March. The broader International Labour Organisation measure of unemployment increased by 32,000 in the three months to February to reach 1,833,000.

However, overall employment rose by 80,000 to a record 27.3 million, suggesting that previously inactive workers are still returning to the labour market.

The earnings data helped the pound to stage a recovery after the publication of the MPC minutes had sparked an early sell-off. The minutes confounded expectations that the MPC had been divided over the April rate cut with the only dissent coming from Willem Buiter who argued for a larger cut.

Sterling closed off its lows against the dollar but was still a cent lower at $1.6065. The euro also gained some modest ground against the pound to close at 66.03p, up from 65.94p.

Flawed ECB threatens euro, says Buiter

By Alasdair Murray

WILLEM BUITER, a member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, yesterday launched a scathing attack on the European Central Bank, claiming its "flawed" structure threatened the common currency's survival at risk".

His warning came as another leading economist accused the British Government of already having taken the decision to join the single currency "behind closed doors". In a pamphlet published by New Europe, the anti-EMU group, Professor Sir James Ball, former chairman of Legal & General and principal of the London Business School, insisted the Government is committing a "gross deception" in pretending the single currency is anything other than a "key element in the march towards some European federal state".

Professor Buiter, in a paper for the Centre for Economic Policy Research, attacked the ECB's culture of secrecy and lack of accountability, claiming the deficiencies could lead to countries leaving the euro zone. He said the ECB's "spurious" attempt to create a culture of "collective responsibility", best represented by its refusal to publish voting records of individual members, is adding to uncertainty about the future direction of monetary policy.

Professor Buiter emphasised that he was writing in a personal capacity. He said he still favoured British membership of EMU and hoped that arrival of the Bank of England's "awkward squad" would help to shake up the ECB.

Commentary, page 31



The Rotary Rocket, an eight-seat, reusable rocket that has been designed to take people into space for an estimated £60,000

Branson plans to go into orbit

By Fraser Nelson

AFTER stamping his flag on everything from pensions to pop music, Richard Branson is poised to take Virgin into the final frontier — space tourism.

Mr Branson is in talks with Rotary Rocket, a Californian company that has designed a reusable, eight-seat spaceship that will take travellers into orbit for a return fare of about £60,000.

The talks involve Virgin operating the flights and painting its name on the rocket. It may contribute towards the £75 million the project still needs.

Mr Branson, who is looking at several other space projects, is reported to have said: "We believe that in the next ten years, the private sector is going to be able to get people into space cheaply enough to make it a commercial proposition."

The Times has also learnt that Mr Branson has paid £4 million for Ulusaba Private Game Reserve, a 500,000-acre tourist resort in South Africa.

He is also hoping to buy a medieval fortress in Morocco, at the top of the Atlas mountains, for £1 million, and convert it into a luxury hotel at the cost of a further £1 million.

They will be run in the same manner as Necker Island, Mr Branson's Caribbean retreat, which he rents out to high-paying holidaymakers and which makes £2 million annual profit.

Today, Virgin Cola will announce a deal to supply Pokka, a Japanese soft drinks company that owns about 120,000 of the country's one million vending machines.

Virgin said the deal could double the size of its cola division by generating £100 million of annual sales.

LINKS
WEBSITE: http://www.rotaryrocket.com
http://www.ulusaba.com

Budget VAT plan ruled illegal

By Jason Nissé

THE Treasury was handed a bloody nose by the courts yesterday when a provision in last month's Budget, worth more than £100 million a year in VAT, was ruled to be in contravention of European Law.

The ruling concerns a controversial move to extend VAT to cover the outsourcing of back office transactions in financial services. Areas covered by the order — which was brought in despite Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, saying he would not widen the scope of VAT — include processing credit card transactions, clearing cheques and providing fsas.

The move brought howls of protest from the financial community. In particular, Financial Data Resources (FDR), the company which processes credit card transactions for the likes of NatWest and Lloyds TSB, argued that this was an attempt to nullify a case before the VAT Tribunal on the same issue.

The Tribunal ruled yesterday that charging VAT on such transactions contravened the European Commission's Sixth VAT Directive and was thus illegal.

Ernst & Young, the accountant that advised FDR, said that the tribunal ruling means that the Budget provision would now have to be withdrawn. "A clear part of the finance order is now *ultra vires*," said Marc Welby, a tax partner at Ernst & Young.

Customs yesterday indicated that it would not be withdrawing the provision and that it would fight the ruling. "We believe we are acting entirely within European Law and have checked this matter with the European Commission," said a spokesman.

Business Today

Beef cuts to the bone
Graham Searjeant on the latest move in the trade wars

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STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6311.0	(-8.8)
Yield	2.19%	
FTSE All Share	2927.43	(-1.83)
Nikkei	16495.02	(-202.09)
New York:		
Dow Jones	10461.44	(+12.89)*
S&P Composite	1317.44	(+11.27)*

US RATES

Federal Funds	4¾%*	(4¾%)
Long bond	96[illegible]*	(96[illegible])
Yield	5.50%*	(5.52%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	5¼%	(5[illegible]%)
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	117.33	(117.48)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6075*	(1.6105)
London:		
$	1.6063	(1.6163)
€	1.5145	(1.5167)
SFr	2.4238	(2.4294)
Yen	192.46	(191.13)
£ index	103.8	(104.0)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.0613*	(1.0628)
SFr	1.5074*	(1.5067)
Yen	119.68*	(118.77)
$ index	108.8	(108.2)

Tokyo close Yen 119.02

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jul)	$15.75	($15.55)

GOLD

London close	$283.95	($284.85)

* denotes midday trading prices

Exchange rates ... Page 30



Bad debt figures take shine off BoS

By Gavin Lumsden

THE Bank of Scotland sent a shiver through the banking sector yesterday over the effects of the economic slowdown as it revealed a 22 per cent increase in provisions for bad debt.

The higher-than-expected increase to £267.9 million for the 12 months to the end of February, saw banking stocks across the board marked down.

Shares of BoS closed off 40p, down more than 4 per cent, at 870p.

Mark Thomas, banking analyst at Credit Lyonnais Laing, said: "Bank of Scotland's bad debt provisions were £116 million in the first half of the year and £152 million in the second.

"That trend is of concern to all, particularly as the bank is saying it is continuing to raise provisions this year."

Most of the bad debts were in personal loans, with £113 million of the provisions coming from Capital Bank, the bank's finance house subsidiary.

The provisions took the shine off an otherwise good set of full-year results. Operating profits before provisions rose 15 per cent to £1.096 billion as the bank increased its overall share of the banking market to 6.6 per, an advance of 0.5 per cent on last year. The final dividend is 7.6p giving a total for the year of 11.6p (9.86p)

Despite the controversy over its recent telephone banking tie-up in the US with Pat Robertson, the right-wing TV evangelist, the bank said there had been "absolutely minuscule effect" on its UK business.

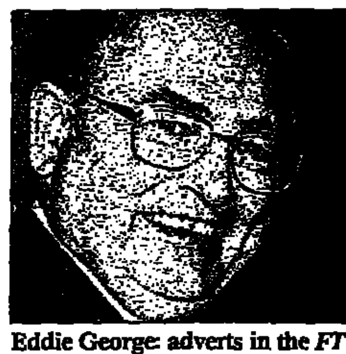
Wanted: two solid City types for top Bank jobs

By Martin Waller

ARE you of undisputed integrity, standing and authority? Do you work in industry? Most important of all, are you definitely not one of the great and the good who always fetch up, by a process as hidden as it is seemingly inevitable, holding the levers of power in the business world?

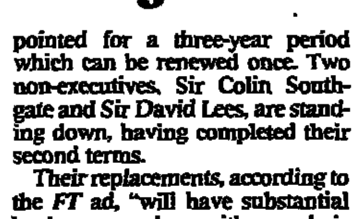
Then the Court of Directors of the Bank of England could be the place for you.

The Bank, for the first time, is advertising for non-executives to join the Court, its ruling body. A discreet advert appeared in yesterday's *Financial Times*, and others will follow elsewhere in the national and regional press.



Eddie George: adverts in the *FT*

There are 16 non-executives who serve alongside Eddie George, the Governor, and his deputies, David Clementi and Mervyn King, the full-time members. They are appointed for a three-year period which can be renewed once. Two non-executives, Sir Colin Southgate and Sir David Lees, are standing down, having completed their second terms.



Their replacements, according to the *FT* ad, "will have substantial business experience either as chair or chief executive of a large organisation . . . or have played a prominent role in a relevant area of public policy".

The job would take up one day a month, and more if the applicant serves on various committees.

LINKS
WEBSITE: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

EU threatens to ban all US beef

By Carl Mortished, International Business Editor

THE European Union is threatening to ban all US beef imports after scientific tests of hormone-free beef imported from America were found to contain traces of hormones.

The finding threatens to increase the temperature of a simmering trade row over an existing EU ban on hormone-treated beef imports.

Trade negotiators in Brussels and Washington are already deadlocked over compensation for the ban on hormone-treated beef which was ruled illegal by the World Trade Organisation. The EU is conducting scientific tests in an effort to justify its prohibition but has admitted it will not be able to comply by the WTO's May 13 deadline.

Europe still imports some $20 million of hormone-free US beef, considered of high quality and sold mainly in restaurants, but tests of recent shipments revealed that 12 per cent of the beef contained hormone residues. EU officials warned the US that a ban would be imposed on all beef from June 15. America is already threatening punitive tariffs on $900 million of European exports, including Roquefort cheese, truffles and motorcycles, if the ban is not lifted.

A delegation from Brussels is in Washington attempting to thrash out a resolution of the banana dispute. Europe has conceded defeat after a WTO panel awarded $191 million in damages to the US but Brussels is challenging America's practice of imposing unilateral sanctions.

Graham Searjeant, page 33

Compaq's $281m poor show

BEN ROSEN, chairman and acting chief executive of Compaq, yesterday described the computer maker's performance this year as "unacceptable", underlining the need for the boardroom bloodletting that took place on Sunday (*Adam Jones writes*).

First-quarter sales rose almost 66 per cent to $9.4 billion (£5.8 billion). Analysts had been expecting $9.9 billion before the warning. Net profits turned out to be $281 million, or 16 cents a share, when analysts had originally hoped for 31 cents.

Compaq's warning this month caused the shares to plummet by nearly a quarter and prompted the departure of Eckhard Pfeiffer, its chief executive.

NTT anger at Byers in C&W bid battle

By Chris Ayres

THE British Government yesterday came under fierce attack from Japan's state-controlled telephone company, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone (NTT), for interfering in the takeover battle for its smaller rival, International Digital Communications (IDC).

The criticism was made as Cable & Wireless, one of Britain's largest telephone companies, raised its estimated Y63 billion (£330 million) cash bid for IDC. IDC's board has already recommended a takeover offer from NTT, but the company's shareholders have not yet accepted it.

The British Government became involved in the increasingly bitter takeover battle when Stephen Byers, Trade and Industry Secretary, wrote to the Japanese Government saying that "in our view, a successful bid by NTT would raise issues of competition and regulatory policy". This is because the Japanese Government not only owns a controlling stake in NTT, but also regulates the country's telecommunications industry.

NTT's president, Junichiro Miyazu, yesterday responded to Mr Byers's letter, saying: "I don't understand what motivated them [the British Government] to say such things. After all, it's a talk between private companies. It is about what gets decided in the market."

He refused to comment on whether NTT would raise its original bid for IDC in response to C&W's fresh offer.

Meanwhile, Britain's Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) stood by its criticism of NTT. One DTI source said: "If it was about a commercial company, it would be different, but it's not, it's about state-controlled NTT."

However, leading telecoms analysts in London have given warning that C&W's aggressive negotiating tactics could irreparably damage the company's reputation in Japan — whose telecoms market is about to explode thanks to deregulation.

C&W sources yesterday responded to this criticism by arguing that the company was being "deliberately non-aggressive". "We are paying our respect to Japanese culture," one insider said, adding that if the company had been involved in a similar situation in the US it would have issued a writ by now. "But we are not going to just roll over," the source said.

C&W hopes that its revised bid — that analysts say could be worth anything up to Y76 billion — will win over IDC's founder shareholders, including Toyota, the car company, and the Itochu trading group. The offer is understood to include job security assurances for IDC's employees.

C&W yesterday said that its offer had been met with "considerable interest".

Britannia could face £1m bill as Hardern pulls out

By Susan Emmett

BRITANNIA building society could face costs of up to £1 million, after Michael Hardern, the freelance butler and carpetbagger, yesterday withdrew his candidature for the board.

However, Britain's third largest building society said last night it was seeking legal advice on whether his handwritten note, delivered to a London branch, constituted a formal withdrawal. Britannia expects to make an announcement this afternoon.

If the note is legal, the building society will face huge costs reballoting its members and setting up another general meeting within a month.

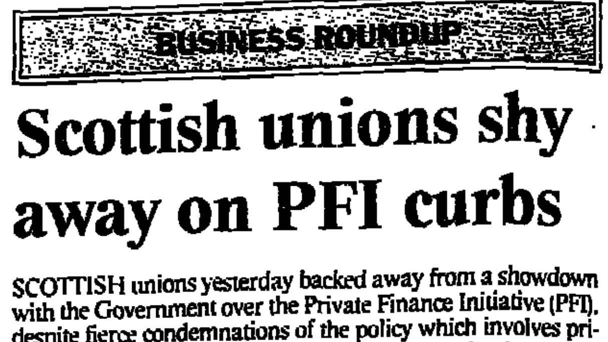
The withdrawal comes only a few days before the vote, which should have been held at the society's annual meeting in Stoke-on-Trent next Thursday.

Britannia said the move will bring the total cost of opposing Mr Hardern to £3 million. The building society has already spent £2 million urging its two million members not to vote for the butler.

Mr Hardern, who has twice stood for the board of Nationwide Building Society, sought to force the Britannia to convert to a bank.

The remaining four candidates for the board, which includes the society's chairman Dr Calum MacLeod, are said to be firm supporters of mutuality.

Mr Hardern said: "I realised that I stand no chance of winning, so decided to withdraw. The whole thing is fixed. Although I knew this when I entered, I only recently came to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to pull out. It's their problem if they now have to reballot themselves."



BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Scottish unions shy away on PFI curbs

SCOTTISH unions yesterday backed away from a showdown with the Government over the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), despite fierce condemnations of the policy which involves private money in public infrastructure projects. The decision to abandon a call for a halt to PFI projects in Scotland came after Gordon Brown brokered a deal last weekend with key union leaders. He offered them more rights on employment conditions and involvement in the bidding process.

The Scottish Trades Union Congress in Glasgow backed a diluted statement from its general council, which said that while it was opposed in principle to PFI, "proper framework agreements, may offer a way forward". But Frank Healey, of the Educational Institute of Scotland, attacked the policy — on which Labour's pledge for new hospitals and schools in Scotland depends — as "a parasite on the education of our children and the health of our members".

Reed Executive ahead

SHARES of Reed Executive rose more than 10 per cent yesterday as the personnel company announced a jump in profits last year and a bullish outlook on current trading. Full-year pre-tax profits for 1998 were £16 million (£14.1 million) on turnover of £243 million (£226 million) on a small swing towards permanent recruitment. The final dividend is 1.8p per share giving a total for the year of 3.6p against 3p in 1997. The shares rose 13½p to 127p, having picked up from 72½p at the start of the year.

R-R £100m contract

ROLLS-ROYCE, the aerospace and defence group, has signed contracts worth about £100 million for the supply and support of Adour Mk 871 engines for Hawk Mk115 advanced jet trainers. The jet trainers will be used in the Nato Flight Training Canada (NFTC) programme. The contracts with British Aerospace, maker of the Hawk, and Canada's Bombardier, cover installed and spare engines for the 18-aircraft fleet starting NFTC operations next year. An engine maintenance agreement is also included in the package.

AstraZeneca sues

ASTRAZENECA, the newly merged pharmaceuticals group, is taking legal action in the US to resist the latest threat of generic competition to Losec, the Astra ulcer drug that is the world's best-selling medicine. Astra is suing Cheminor Drugs of India, and its American affiliate, Reddy Cheminor, which hope to market an unbranded version of the drug. Analysts believe the expiry of key patents will expose Losec to generic competition from late 2001.

Profits up at LSH

LAMBERT SMITH HAMPTON, the property adviser, said it is benefiting from its switch away last year from acting as a conventional chartered surveyor to catering for the growing trend in outsourcing property services. In the year to January 31, the group, which now has more than 10,000 clients on its books, saw pre-tax profits rise 23 per cent to £4.7 million on turnover up 13 per cent at £47.5 million. The final dividend of 3.7p (3.4p) brings the full-year total to 5.6p (4.5p).

EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.58	2.41
Austria Sch	21.85	20.19
Belgium Fr	64.31	59.35
Canada $	2.512	2.324
Cyprus Cyp £	0.9191	0.8476
Denmark Kr	11.85	10.96
Egypt	5.69	5.08
Finland Mkk	9.56	8.81
France Fr	10.41	9.63
Germany Dm	3.126	2.884
Greece Dr	521	492
Hong Kong $	13.28	12.08
Iceland	130	110
Indonesia	17531	12531
Ireland Pt	1.2478	1.1588
Israel Shk	6.86	6.20
Italy Lira	3110	2873
Japan Yen	207.24	189.71
Malta	0.679	0.620
Netherlds Gld	3.530	3.235
New Zealand $	3.08	2.84
Norway Kr	13.12	12.18
Portugal Esc	316.29	294.26
S Africa Rd	10.43	9.48
Spain Pta	263.60	244.81
Sweden Kr	14.29	13.19
Switzerland Fr	2.577	2.359
Turkey Lira	638951	596482
USA $	1.714	1.571

Rates for small denomination banknotes as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates at close yesterday.

Unions hail new Ford deal

By Carl Mortished



NICK RAY

Ron Doel, union convenor, left, with his colleague Steve Riley in Dagenham yesterday

FORD is to produce a new model at its car assembly plant in Dagenham as part of a deal struck with unions which will introduce more flexible working practices and safeguard up to 30,000 jobs.

The deal will reverse a steady decline in the fortunes of the Essex plant, which is currently working a four-day week due to a slump in sales of the Fiesta on the Continent. A one-week total shutdown of Dagenham production is still scheduled to commence on Monday.

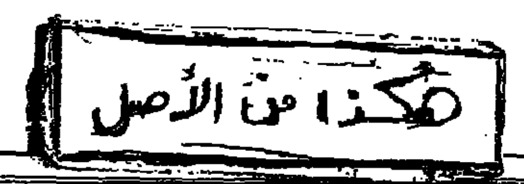
Dagenham unions hailed the agreement as a turning-point in the plant's fortunes. Steve Turner of the Transport & General Workers' Union said it was the result of a two-year trade union initiative aimed at achieving world-class status for the plant.

Ken Jackson, AUEW general secretary, said: "It demonstrates the tangible benefit of unions and management working together rather than adopting confrontational attitudes."

The deal confirms that Dagenham will continue to assemble new model Fiesta cars, expected to be launched in before 2002. In addition, Dagenham will be the single source of a new Ford model for Western Europe, believed to be a "people carrier", with plans for 150,000 units per year.

The new deal is similar to the package recently agreed between unions and Rover in Birmingham. More flexible working hours and job mobility will be introduced as well as a reduction in overtime, enabling management to gear working hours to production levels.

The new deal will increase capacity at Dagenham from 272,000 units to 300,000 and will balance Fiesta production between Dagenham and Ford's plant in Cologne, Germany.

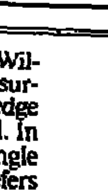


Alice's adventures in euroland



COMMENTARY

by our City Editor



For a Dutch economist, Wilhelm Buiter exhibits a surprisingly deep knowledge of the works of Lewis Carroll. In his latest treatise on the single European currency, he refers readers to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and suggests that their researches should progress through the looking glass to *The Hunting of the Snark* and on to *An Agony in Eight Fits.*

If the first few months of the single currency have been far from comfortable, Professor Buiter clearly believes there is worse to come.

In fact, although an avowed believer in a federal Europe with one currency, he is indeed fearful for the future of the euro. He argues that the structure of the European Central Bank, and the way it is operating, pose a threat to its independence. And if its independence is in doubt, then there will be scope for grievance and even the prospect of some countries flouncing out of the currency.

Professor Buiter wants to see more openness and accountability for the ECB. As a member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, he has emerged as something of a fan of our central bank and its chief banker. In a back-handed compliment, he suggests that if Britain were in the single currency, Europe would benefit from a "one man awkward squad" at the ECB's meetings — Eddie George.

The Bank of England's Governor might be able to prevail upon the ECB to publish the minutes of its meetings while they still have some relevance. Instead, Wim Duisenberg, the determined ECB President, has advocated a discreet silence of 16 years. Professor Buiter, who would be an avid reader of the minutes at the earliest available opportunity, sums up the Duisenberg attitude as: so long as Daddy brings home the bacon, then Mummy and the children have no business asking how he may have come by it.

But at the end of the 20th century, Daddy's behaviour immediately becomes the subject of inquiry and suspicion. The MPC actually speeded up the publication of its own minutes in order to quell the counterproductive speculation that preceded them.

Sophisticated economies need to know the thinking that is going into central bank decisions. So Professor Buiter also wants to see ECB voting records published and the inflation forecasts which are influencing policy.

Yet as a member of the MPC, he will know that even the most open approach to determining monetary policy can hit problems. It would be interesting to read unabridged minutes of the meetings at which the MPC discussed the flawed earnings figures that led them to hike up interest rates unnecessarily last year. And it would be equally intriguing to hear their reaction to yesterday's new figures, replete with bonuses, which purport to show an upward trend once more, but beg more questions than they answer.

Moment of truth for euro-doubters

The Jabberwocky does not feature in a new pamphlet by Professor Sir James Ball but he does share Professor Buiter's view that the single currency could end in the Pool of Tears.

The title of his work gives the game away: *The European Single Currency: A Bad Idea.*

The former principal of the London Business School who went on to chair Legal & General, is now on the advisory council of New Europe, one of the burgeoning number of pressure groups arising to campaign for or against Britain's membership of the single currency.

New Europe favours a single market without benefit, or strictures, of a single currency and all that entails. Its members would have been nodding in agreement with much of what Professor Buiter, from the opposing camp, had to say. The following passage would have merited cheers of approval. "The whole European integration experiment, from the Coal and Steel Community on, has been a political wolf dressed in economic sheep's clothing."

New Europe could have chorused "Told you so". Instead, Sir James ventured to wonder aloud on the position of BP. The former chairman is now ensconced in the House of Lords, a Minister with a European mission. But Lord Simon's successor, Sir John Browne, has turned BP into BP Amoco, a global business and one which might be expected to prefer the dollar to the euro as a currency of first choice.

The voices of many business leaders have been raised to sing the benefits that would flow to them of Britain joining the single currency but these are not immediately apparent to all those who are trading internationally. Yet while these people are prepared to voice their doubts privately, few are prepared to publicly say something which they believe would be unpopular with the Government. The battling is left to the old warhorses such as Sir Stanley Kalms, Lord Hanson, Lord Young et al.

But in the next few months, the Euro-doubters who are running British businesses are going to have to be brave and voice their qualms. Otherwise, they will lose the battle by default. The CBI, an organisation which has made clear its allegiance to the single currency, has now lined up Sir Iain Vallance to succeed Sir Clive Thompson as President. The BT chairman is as keen on the euro as the Rentokil Initial chairman he will succeed. The chances are that Adair Turner's successor as Director-General is unlikely to be a sceptic.

Panel takes a beating over CSG

The strange and complex brouhaha surrounding Corporate Services Group is in danger of making the Takeover Panel seem foolish. The panel has ruled that Michael Ashcroft must proceed with a takeover offer that he does not want to make, and which shareholders do not want even to consider until the employment company's boardroom has been turned inside out. The likelihood is that Mr Ashcroft will now make a revised offer that will inevitably fail — although in a blizzard of disinformation, some suggest Mr A remains keen on CSG.

Mr Ashcroft made his offer conditional on there being no changes to CSG's board — strange given CSG's two profit warnings last month. Still, it's his offer and the panel was fully aware of the condition.

Pressure from angry shareholders threatens to remove five directors and appoint three new ones — but the panel views this turmoil as not sufficiently material to allow Mr Ashcroft to let his offer lapse.

The panel is left deciding what is important to the acquiring company. What will happen if CSG's 1998 results are qualified or show profits of less than £19 million — which, on the face of it, would trigger other conditions of the Ashcroft bid? It is clearly important that bidders should not be able to impose frivolous conditions that allow them to withdraw offers on a whim. But this case risks leaving bidders too vulnerable to the commercial judgments of the panel.

At Liberty

LIBERTY is to get a not-so-new look. The Regent Street store is cleverly consulting with National Heritage to come up with a redevelopment scheme that will be appropriate and more affordable one than the grandiose plan that eventually scuppered the Denis Cassidy regime. But will Philip Bowman be there to see it through? He took on the role of chairman before becoming finance director at Allied Domecq and the chances are that he may have his eyes on advancement. He could need his liberty.

More cuts on the way at DFS as profits slip again

By Sarah Cunningham

DFS, the furniture retailer, saw interim profits fall by a third after it was forced to cut prices by an average of 4 per cent in a competitive market.

Yesterday, Sir Graham Kirkham, DFS executive chairman and founder, said prices are set to come down further in the second-half.

Sir Graham last year reported the first fall in DFS annual profits in its 30-year history.

Pre-tax profit in the six months to January 30 was £12 million, down from £18.2 million a year earlier. Sales rose from £130 million to £137.9 million, boosted by new store openings. Like-for-like sales, ignoring new space, were down 7.4 per cent.

The company's operating margin fell from 13.2 per cent a year earlier to 8 per cent. Earnings per share fell from 11.8p to 7.8p, but the interim dividend is being maintained at 4.4p.

Sir Graham said that the company intends to increase its proportion of own-manufactured products from 10 to 15 per cent. It plans to increase the capacity of its Doncaster factory, at the cost of about £500,000.

Kirkham: "strongly placed"

Spending on advertising has increased as a proportion of sales to over 10 per cent, he said. New advertising campaigns are intended to be more "aspirational" and focused on younger consumers. It is also less focused on interest-free credit.

Sir Graham said that "within what remains a tough business environment for all furniture retailers, we believe that DFS is achieving a satisfactory performance and is continuing to gain market share."

DFS is "champing at the bit and strongly placed to take advantage of any upturn," he said.

He estimated that DFS' share of the upholstered furniture market is between 12 and 13 per cent. The company has brought in a new buying team and which has begun to introduce new ranges.

Three new stores opened during the first half, at Maidstone, Hanley (Stoke-on-Trent) and Southampton. Since the beginning of the second half, a new store has been opened at Beckton, off London's North Circular Road. Another has opened at Bolton. Sir Graham said he hopes to maintain the store opening programme at around five per year.

Stores have been refubished at Gateshead, Bury St Edmonds and Cannock. The Preston, Darlington and Kings Lynn stores are due to be refurbished in the second half. Capital expenditure in the first half totalled £8.4 million (£7.3 million.)

Tempus, page 32

NTL kicks Newcastle bid into touch

By Jason Nissé

NTL, the cable TV group, yesterday dropped its planned £160 million offer for Newcastle United, the Premier League football club.

The US-owned company said that comments in the Monopolies & Mergers Commission report blocking BSkyB's bid for Manchester United made it clear that an offer for Newcastle by NTL would be blocked.

Newcastle shares fell 5p to 73½p in reaction.

"If there was any way we thought we could have won we would have gone ahead," said Geoffrey Hamilton-Fairley, the chief executive of Premium TV, the NTL subsidiary which would have owned Newcastle.

NTL said it has studied the MMC report and it became clear that the competition authorities were fundamentally opposed to media companies owning football clubs.

It had agreed a deal in which it bought an intital 6.3 per cent stake from the Hall family, which controls the club, and in which it would pay 111.7p a share for the Halls' remaining 51 per cent stake.

NTL said it will retain its holding and if the regulatory environment changed, it would renew its interest.

Tempus, page 32

Spring Ram sells Stag for £4.25m

Spring Ram Corporation, the household fittings and furniture manufacturer, is to sell its Stag Holdings furniture business to a management team for £4.25 million in cash and shares. The company will take a £12.7 million loss on the disposal. Stag was acquired by Spring Ram in 1992 for £12.4 million and was profitable in 1993 only. For the year ended January 2, 1999, Stag incurred an operating loss of £900,000, before exceptional items, on turnover of £27.9 million.

WPP expands

WPP Group, the advertising and business services company, has acquired the business of CP in the US, which provides outsourced customer care services focusing on the information technology sector, for an undisclosed sum.

Talks confirmed

Shares of Inn Business rose 6½p to 77½p as the tenanted pub group confirmed that it is in takeover talks with Alchemy Partners, the venture capitalist. Analysts are betting on a bid of 80p-90p per share, valuing Inn Business at up to £72 million.

Novartis slides

Novartis, the Swiss healthcare group, is continuing to suffer sluggish sales, with its first quarter turnover falling 1 per cent to SwFr7.87 billion (£3.2 billion). Its shares fell about 3.5 per cent.



Lasmo in sale to French gas utility

By Carl Mortished, International Business Editor

GAZ DE FRANCE is expanding in the UK with the £90 million purchase of a package of southern North Sea gas assets from Lasmo and the acquisition of a gas marketing company, Volunteer Energy.

GDF Britain, a subsidiary of the French gas utility, is buying Lasmo's interest in the Caister, Boulton Hunter, Chiswick and Cavendish fields as well as pipeline systems and exploration acreage. The fields have proven and probable reserves of 12.2 million barrels of oil equivalent and Lasmo said that it would book a profit of £14 million on the sale.

Keith Lough, of Lasmo, said: "We have realised full value from this package of assets, which were non-core to Lasmo and are clearly worth more to a company with an interest in the European gas business."

The deal will help Gaz de France to secure supplies of gas as France has dwindling reserves of the fuel.

It is also paying £2 million for Volunteer, a deal that follows the French state-owned company's move to sell gas in Britain via the Interconnector. UK gas prices are higher than on the Continent, where prices are linked to the weak price of fuel oil, allowing Gaz de France to profit from exports to the UK.

Ashcroft forced to go on with bid

By Paul Durman

SHAREHOLDERS in Corporate Services Group, the troubled employment company at the centre of a complex takeover wrangle, are demanding that four of the group's directors should resign immediately to spare it further turmoil (See Commentary, this page).

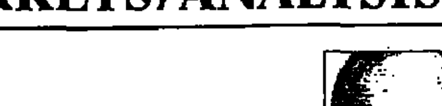
A spokesman for shareholders owning about 60 per cent of CSG was speaking after the Takeover Panel forced Michael Ashcroft, the wealthy businessman who is treasurer to the Conservative Party, to continue with his £250 million takeover offer.

The dissident shareholders have lost confidence in Ralph Hulbert, chairman, and other directors and want a new board to assess the state of CSG and the merits of the Ashcroft offer.

A shareholder meeting to enforce the management changes will not take place until May 4. The spokesman said: "The board should in all conscience resign forthwith because Ashcroft has to go on with his bid. We need to be advised by a new board."

Mr Ashcroft's offer was conditional on there being no changes to CSG's board, but the Panel has ruled this is not a sufficiently important issue to allow him to withdraw his bid. New Carlisle, his bid vehicle, is expected to make an offer revised in such a way that will make it almost certain to fail.

Rea Brothers, New Carlisle's adviser, has already sought fresh discussions with Investec Henderson Crosthwaite, adviser to CSG.





Wall Street's rally fails to excite pessimistic City

SHARE prices on the London stock market are set to extend this week's sharp falls. That was the stark message going out to clients last night from brokers after the London market failed to respond to an opening rally on Wall Street where the Dow Jones industrial average posted an opening rise of 105-points.

The response from the FTSE 100 index was lacklustre. After reversing a 34-point deficit, it traded in narrow limits for the rest of the session before closing 8.8 down at 6,311.0. By contrast, the FTSE 250 index rose 9.8 to 5,763.4 as total turnover reached 1.27 billion shares.

Sentiment was undermined by the stronger than expected rise in average earnings. Even the prospect of another cut in base rates following publication of the minutes of the last Monetary Policy Committee meeting failed to inject fresh life into the market.

Dealers said that any further setbacks for New York would inevitably lead to fresh falls in London where ratings are starting to look stretched.

Best performer among blue chips was **BAT**, up 39½p to 512½p, as HSBC Securities, the broker, raised its recommendation from "add" to "buy". Speculative buying fuelled fresh gains in **Marks & Spencer**, up 16½p to 461p, as the story went round that Warren Buffett would soon confirm a 3 per cent holding. Just for good measure, there was also talk of a possible merger with **Tesco**, 12½p better at 190p.

Kingfisher rallied 25½p to 771½p with Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, the US securities house, claiming this week's sell-off in the shares had been overdone. It has raised its recommendation from "outperform" to "strong buy" and set a target price of 950p.

Bullish comments from Credit Lyonnais Securities, the broker, lifted **Pearson** 66p to £12.81. It has raised its recommendation from "add" to "buy" having seen the price drop back from its peak of £14.31 achieved in March. Morgan Stanley is also said to be pushing the stock to clients ahead of a series of City presentations soon.

One of the largest movers of the day was **Oliver Group**, which jumped 4p to 20½p. Flemings is believed to have sold its 8.6 per cent stake in the shoe retailer to Peter Webb, a corporate recovery specialist. Stead & Simpson, another shoe retailer, is also said to be stalking the company.

A fresh burst of speculative buying hoisted **Powerscreen** 7p higher to 157p on turnover of 1.58 million shares. The Northern Ireland-based engineer is already having talks with one potential buyer, believed to be American tractor maker John Deere. But whispers in the market claim another bidder waits in the wings with an offer in the region of 200p a share. The Powerscreen share price plunged from a peak of 607½p last year on the back of accounting irregularities.

Technology stocks recovered some of their composure with gains for **Logica**, 57½p to 592½p, **ARM Holdings**, 56¼p to 705p, **FI Group**, 15p to 302½p, **Easynet Group**, 20p to 525p, and **Geo Interactive Media**, 7½p to 144p. It follows the heavy sell-off of high-tech stocks earlier in the week on Nasdaq where prices had been going through the roof.

Dixons, which also suffered a sharp fall on Tuesday reflecting its Freeserve Internet business, rallied 68p to £12.98.

The hotel sector has hit a purple patch, with optimism outweighing fears of a backlash from the Yugoslavian crisis. Although the big operators, particularly those with a London presence, claim to have seen no impact, memories of the effects of the Gulf War are still fresh in some investors' minds.

Some of the interest undoubtedly emanates from continuing hopes of corporate action. **Jarvis Hotels**, which was recently trading at less than 100p, was up another 5½p to 160p in heavy volume on hopes that NH Hoteles, a Spanish rival, is ready to offer 190p a share. **Millennium & Copthorne Hotels**, unchanged at 580p, is also known to be in the market for deals. It said recently that it was considering a possible merger with CDL Hotels International, its Hong Kong-listed majority shareholder, as well as a number of individual acquisitions.

Note the heavy turnover in **Signet** with the price easing 2p to 55¼p as 20.68 million shares changed hands. Several lumpy sellers appeared on the scene with a line of 4.33 million shares going through at 57¼p, 3.5 million at 57p and a further two million at 57p.

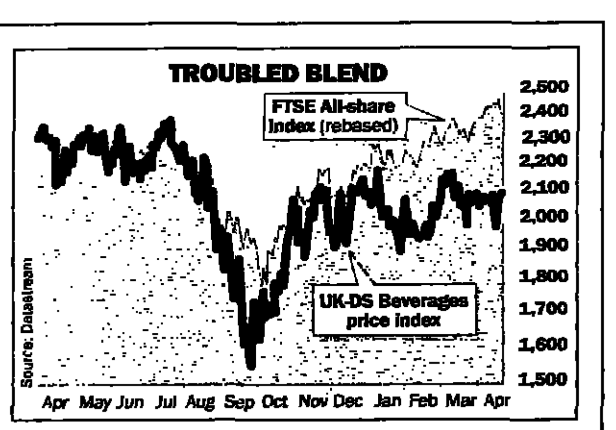
Newcomer **Voyager 2000** was trading at about the 6½p level after a placing by Fiske, the broker, at 5p on AIM.

□ **GILT-EDGED:** Investors were focused on the longer end of the market where prices managed to extend this week's gains. In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt finished 15p down at £117.33 as 21,000 contracts were completed. Among conventional issues, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 rose 25p to £147.93, while in shorts Treasury 7 per cent 2002 eased 5p to £106.29.

□ **NEW YORK:** US shares moved higher as the switch to cyclicals eased. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 12.89 to 10,461.44.



Peter Salsbury, chief executive, saw shares of M&S record gains as rumours of a possible link with Tesco circulated



THERE seems little these days for the whisky distillers to cheer about.

This has been reflected in the performance of the quoted companies with Highland, 1p easier at 244p, having fallen from a peak of 325p last year. Glenmorangie, unchanged at 572½p, is also below its best, while the bigger companies, such as Allied Domecq, 2p down at 490p, have also struggled. Export volumes in 1998 plunged to their lowest levels for 15 years, falling 8.1 per cent to 276.7 million litres. Values also declined 15 per cent to £2.03 billion.

Sutherlands, the Edinburgh-based broker, says the figures were disappointing but not unexpected.

It has been obvious for some time that export markets were bound to suffer because of the economic downturn in South-East Asia. But there is a ray of hope. Alan Gray, of Sutherlands, says: "There is some evidence that the worst has been seen in Asia and that exports will partially recover in 1999."

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones ... 10461.44 (+12.89)
S&P Composite ... 1317.44 (+11.27)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average ... 16495.02 (−202.09)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng ... 12543.76 (+133.98)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index ... 555.21 (+5.59)

Sydney:
AO ... 3068.3 (−21.8)

Frankfurt:
DAX ... 5163.29 (+76.00)

Singapore:
Straits ... 1842.33 (+32.85)

Brussels:
BEL20 ... 3255.71 (+32.44)

Paris:
CAC-40 ... 4291.60 (+38.33)

Zurich:
SMI Index ... 7124.7 (−4.7)

London:
FT 30 ... 3972.8 (−12.8)
FTSE 100 ... 6311.0 (−8.8)
FTSE 250 ... 5763.4 (+9.8)
FTSE 350 ... 3021.4 (−2.7)
FTSE Eurotop 100 ... 2957.01 (+12.63)
FTSE All-Share ... 2927.43 (−1.83)
FTSE Non Financials ... 2941.14 (+9.13)
FTSE Fixed Interest ... 154.86 (+0.03)
FTSE Govt Secs ... 111.56 (+0.10)
Bargains ... 86208
SEAQ Volume ... 1271.8m
US$ ... 1.6065 (−0.0096)
Euro ... 0.6603 (+0.0009)
£:SDR ... 1.1913
Exchange Index ... 103.8 (−0.2)
Bank on England official close (4pm)
RPI ... 164.1 Mar (2.1%) Jan 1987 = 100
RPIX ... 163.2 Mar (2.7%) Jan 1987 = 100

RECENT ISSUES

Affinity Internet	143½		...
Br Smaller Co's VCT (100)	95		...
Br Smlr Cos VCT Wrts	12½		..
Cairngorm Euro Restruct	112	−	½
Cairngorm Restruct Wrts	25	+	½
Edinburgh Inc & Val	108½	+	2½
Edinburgh Val Zero Dv Pf	106	+	1½
Gartmore High Income	109½	+	¾
Gartmore Zero Div Pf	109	−	¼
M Currie Cap Return	77		...
M Currie Portfolio	81¾		...
Northern 2 VCT	100		...
Sherry FitzGerald	147		...
Sports Internet	170½	+	7
Triven VCT	100		...
Voyager 2000	6½		...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Calluna n/p (125)	1¼	+	¼
Mice Group n/p (80)	11	−	1
Versalite n/p (05)	1¼		...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Virtual Internet	170	+ 26	+ 18.0
Brooke Indl	82	+ 12	+ 17.1
London Pacific	427½	+ 55	+ 14.7
Xenova	114	+ 13	+ 12.8
NMT	167½	+ 19	+ 12.7
Reed Executive	127	+ 13½	+ 11.8
Eclipse Blinds	120	+ 11½	+ 10.5
Laird	300½	+ 26½	+ 9.6
Swrld-Rve	365	+ 30	+ 8.9
Logica	592½	+ 47½	+ 8.7
ARM Holdings	705	+ 56¼	+ 8.6
Brit Amer Tob	512½	+ 39½	+ 8.3
Computacenter	500	+ 37½	+ 8.1
Acorn	236½	+ 17½	+ 7.9
Jardine Math	244	+ 17½	+ 7.7
Deutsche Bk	3200	+225	+ 7.5
AEA Tech	347½	+ 24	+ 7.4
Hunting	150½	+ 10	+ 7.1
Savills	158½	+ 10	+ 6.7
Tomkins	270	+ 15	+ 5.8
KS Biomedix	372	+ 20½	+ 5.8
Ricardo Group	303½	+ 16½	+ 5.7

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
WMC	229½	− 24½	− 9.6
Molins	125	− 12	− 8.7
KBC Adv Tech	165	− 15	− 8.3
Euro Telecom	123½	− 10	− 7.4
Independent	231½	− 15	− 6.0
Rank Grp	262	− 16¼	− 5.8
Honda Motor	2665½	−165	− 5.8
Billiton	187¾	− 11¼	− 5.6

TEMPUS

Scots take the high road

BANK shares have surged in recent weeks as the likelihood of a hard economic landing appeared to recede. Bank of Scotland's bad debt provisions for last year suggest that things may not be as rosy as they now seem. BoS stands to lose big time if there is, after all, an economic crunch.

BoS has enjoyed a racier rating than most. Even after yesterday's 40p fall the shares, at 870p, trade at about 21 times historic earnings. It may not have the exposure to high risk emerging market and hedge fund-type debt, but it is a highly geared play on the UK economy. If things get rough over here expect its shares to tumble a lot further than its peers.

Yet, at the same time, it would be wrong to overstate the dangers. Under innovative and energetic management, BoS has sustained a two-decade run that is the envy of its bigger English rivals. Yes, it has been growing UK wide from a relatively small base, but since 1980 the bank has consistently increased its share of the market at twice the sector average. Although return on capital has been lower than many rivals — at just over 20 per cent — BoS has offset this weakness by growing business by about 15 per cent a year.

BoS's personal and commerical loans business carries good margins, margins which are accentuated by cost cutting. On deposits BoS is exploiting the potential beyond the conventional branch network. Its venture with Sainsbury's Bank has attracted 950,000 savers and although it has recently been overshadowed by the likes of Egg, Prudential's new bank, it will make a profit for shareholders sooner than the other two. On balance, BoS shares merit their place on the buy list.

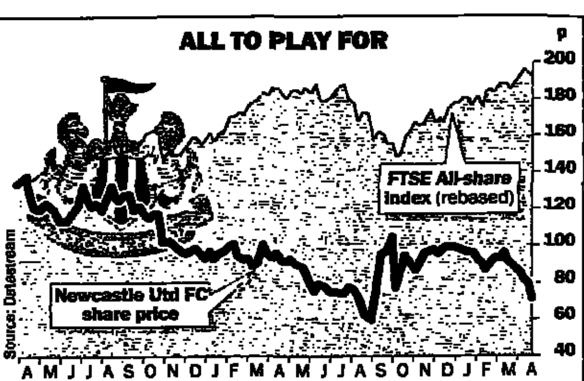
Newcastle Utd

NEWCASTLE UNITED has suffered its fair share of setbacks. It lost Kevin Keegan, its inspirational team manager, just before it floated on the stock market. It lost most of its board and a second coach after it joined the market, and it also lost a battle to build a new stadium. It lost in the FA Cup final last year, and two directors lost their common sense chatting to a journalist in a Spanish brothel.

Now Newcastle has lost a bidder willing to pay £160 million for the company that today is worth only £104 million. Meanwhile, shareholders have lost their shirts. Shares currently trade at about half the 1997 float price.

At these levels Newcastle shares may look cheap. The club makes a good operating profit and as it is adding an extra 20,000 seats to its stadium, it is on course to make more. It has a strong fan following and its television rights are valuable, whether it negotiates them on its own or goes through the Premier League structure. And NTL's bid interest shows that the club has attractions, especially if the regulatory environment is relaxed.

In share price terms, however, things may deteriorate further before they improve. NTL brought the Hall family out as sellers of their majority stake in the club, and without the appearance of a new bidder the stock overhang will drag on the price. For money-minded investors, football may always be a questionable proposition. The attractions of Magpies' shares certainly remain well hidden.



DFS

IN a very difficult furniture market, DFS increased its sales and its market share. But the cost was huge. Its operating profits margin, which DFS maintained at above 13 per cent in the first half of 1998, has crashed to just 8 per cent.

Customers, it seems, have not been avoiding furniture purchases altogether, but they have been holding out for low, low prices.

DFS has always argued that it gave value for money. But customers have become cannier. They have seen through the interest-free credit wheeze — that it is only available if they pay full price for the goods. Now they demand interest free credit, but they want outright cheaper product too.

Having cut its margins, DFS is going to find it very difficult to rebuild them. Even if people start spending more freely, they are going to resent any significant increase in prices. Moreover, there is no sign that spending on furniture and carpets has started to increase, despite the cuts in interest rates. At the same time, competition is increasing all the time, with a large number of new furniture stores opening.

With no sign of an improvement in the company's fortunes, the shares are likely to remain in the doldrums. Bargain hunters should stick to looking for cut-price DFS sofas, not DFS shares.

Rank

RANK Group's first quarter is the leisure group's least active trading period. In 1998 it produced operating profits of just £21 million, out of a total for the year of £280 million. Yesterday's AGM statement was downbeat, admittedly, but in light of the fact that the period is so slow it was a little surprising that the share price dipped 16¼p to 262p.

If shareholders were disappointed there was no more promising statement of intent from Mike Smith, the new chief executive, they should not have been. The former Ladbroke man only joined Rank on April 1 and he has hardly had time to get round the estate, let alone reach any big decisions on strategy.

Given the tribulations of his predecessor, he can be forgiven for treading cautiously. Investors will have to wait for August's interims before he provides any substantive assessment of prospects.

Mr Smith's timing, however, looks impeccable. He arrives just as Rank looks set to benefit from the recent heavy investment in its facilities, including Butlins and Odeon. He is further helped by a reviving economy.

Yesterday's share drop looks like profit-taking after the recent run. More shareholder patience, however, should be rewarded. Hold.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE

COMMODITIES

LIFFE COCOA

May	741-739	Jul	880-876
Jul	764-762	Sep	897-895
Sep	786-785	Dec	920-915
Dec	814-812	Mar	unq
Mar	840-838		

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm) CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	16.05	+0.15
Brent 15 day (Jun)	16.00	+0.10
Brent 15 day (Jul)	15.75	+0.05
W Texas Intermediate (Jun)	17.85	+0.25
W Texas Intermediate (Jul)	17.65	+0.15

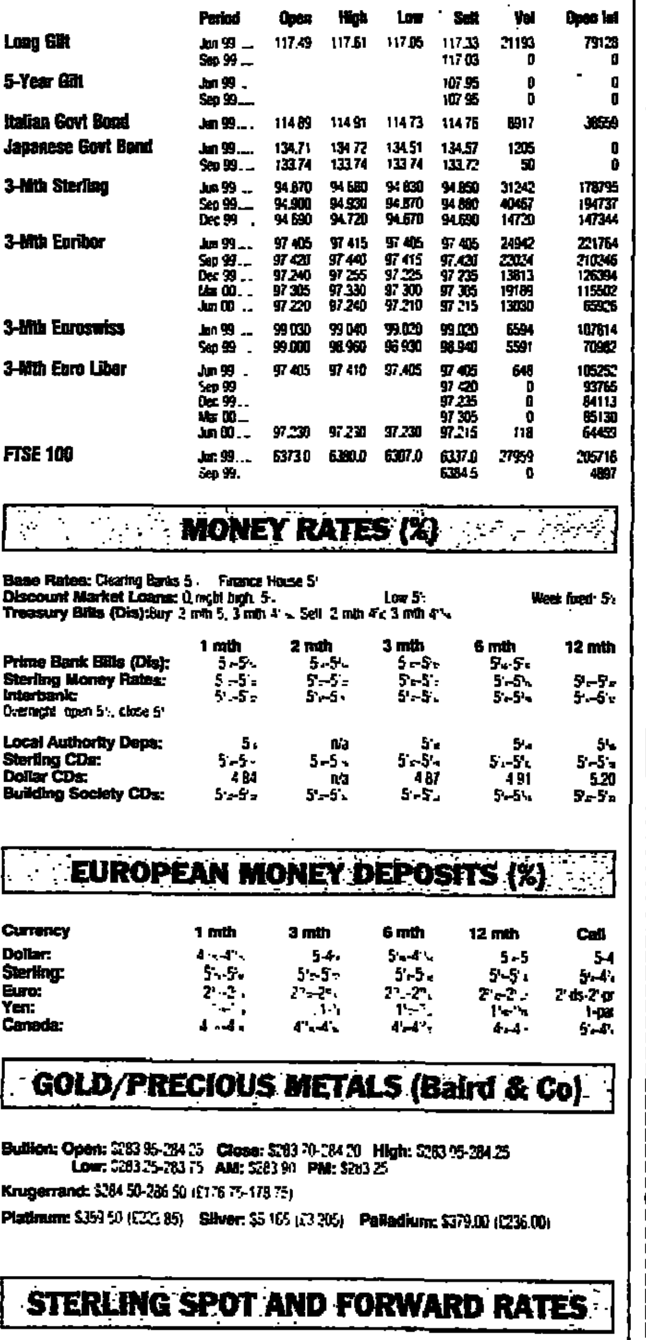
GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
May	77.50	May	75.25
Jul	78.50	Sep	73.60
Sep	75.20	Nov	75.60
Nov	77.30	Jan	77.60
Jan	79.30	Mar	79.60

[illegible]

LIFFE OPTIONS

[illegible]



LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Jun 99	117.49	117.61	117.05	117.33	21193	79128
	Sep 99				117.03	0	0
5-Year Gilt	Jun 99				107.95	0	0
	Sep 99				107.95	0	0
Italian Govt Bond	Jun 99	114.89	114.91	114.73	114.76	8917	38659
Japanese Govt Bond	Jun 99	134.71	134.72	134.51	134.57	1205	0
	Sep 99	133.74	133.74	133.74	133.72	50	0
3-Mth Sterling	Jun 99	94.870	94.880	94.830	94.850	31242	178795
	Sep 99	94.900	94.930	94.870	94.880	40467	194737
	Dec 99	94.690	94.720	94.670	94.690	14720	147344
3-Mth Euribor	Jun 99	97.405	97.415	97.405	97.405	24942	221764
	Sep 99	97.420	97.440	97.415	97.420	23024	210346
	Dec 99	97.240	97.255	97.225	97.235	13813	126394
	Mar 00	97.305	97.330	97.300	97.305	19189	115502
	Jun 00	97.220	97.240	97.210	97.215	13030	65926
3-Mth Euroswiss	Jun 99	99.030	99.040	99.020	99.020	6594	107614
	Sep 99	99.000	98.960	98.930	98.940	5591	70982
3-Mth Euro Libor	Jun 99	97.405	97.410	97.405	97.405	648	105252
	Sep 99				97.420	0	93765
	Dec 99				97.235	0	84113
	Mar 00				97.305	0	85130
	Jun 00	97.230	97.230	97.230	97.215	118	64453
FTSE 100	Jun 99	6373.0	6380.0	6307.0	6337.0	27959	205716
	Sep 99				6384.5	0	4897

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 5½ Finance House 5½
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 5½ Low 5½ Week fixed: 5½
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 5; 3 mth 4[illegible] Sell: 2 mth 4[illegible]; 3 mth 4[illegible]

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Overnight: open 5½, close 5½					
Local Authority Deps:	5½	n/a	5½	5½	5½
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	4.84	n/a	4.87	4.91	5.20
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5-4
Sterling:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	2[illegible]ds-2[illegible]pr
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1-par
Canada:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open: $283.95-284.25 **Close:** $283.70-284.20 **High:** $283.95-284.25 **Low:** $283.25-283.75 **AM:** $283.90 **PM:** $283.25

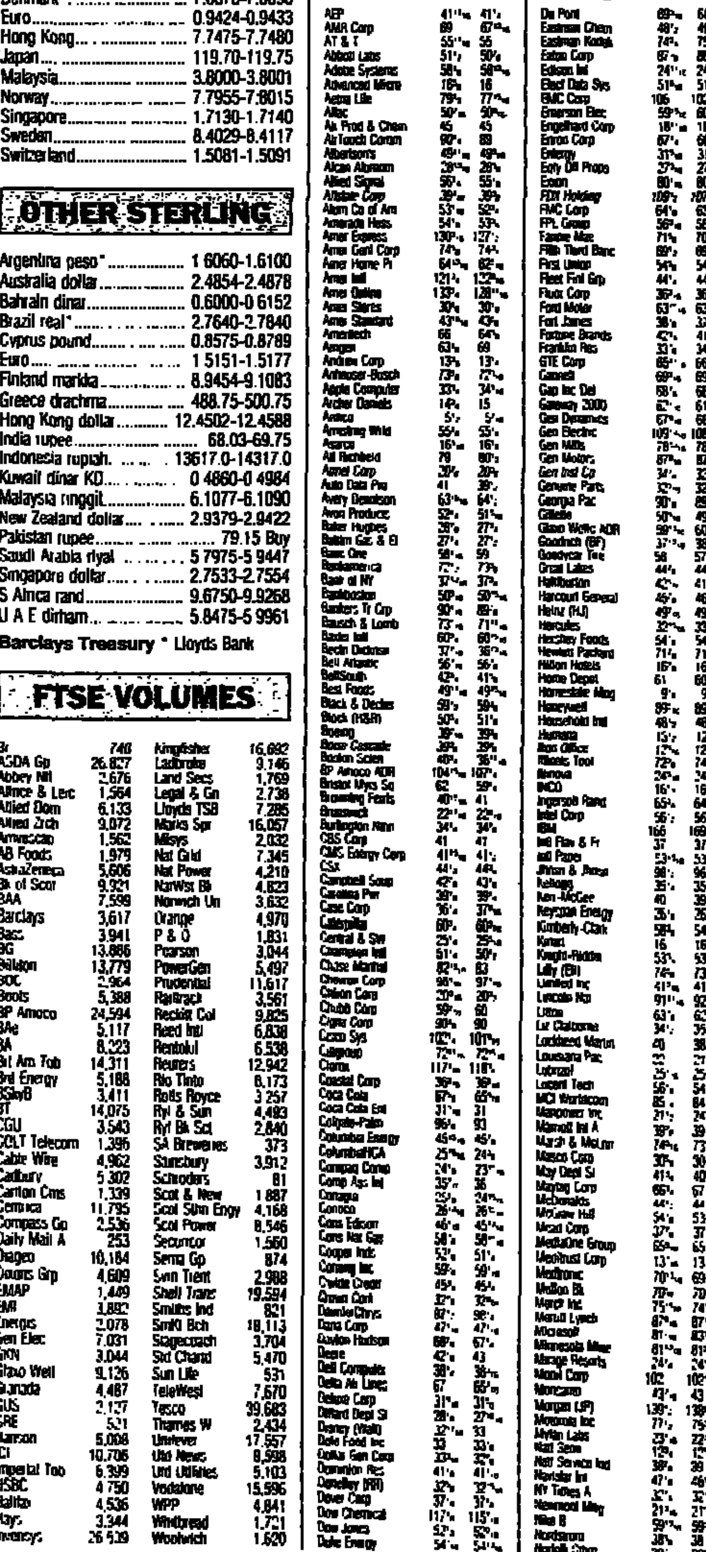
Krugerrand: $284.50-286.50 (£176.75-178.75)

Platinum: $359.50 (£223.85) **Silver:** $5.165 (£3.205) **Palladium:** $379.00 (£236.00)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for April 21	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	11.255-11.292	11.255-11.265	[illegible]pr	[illegible]pr
Euro	1.5135-1.5155	1.5139-1.5151	0.14-0.17ds	0.41-0.45ds
Montreal	2.3918-2.4022	2.3918-2.3941	0.16-0.08pr	0.40-0.27pr
New York	1.6063-1.6128	1.6063-1.6068	0.067-0.047pr	0.128-0.097pr
Oslo	12.513-12.567	12.513-12.526	[illegible]ds	[illegible]ds
Stockholm	13.489-13.530	13.489-13.510	[illegible]pr	[illegible]pr
Tokyo	191.32-192.66	192.37-192.55	[illegible]pr	2[illegible]pr
Zurich	2.4226-2.4368	2.4226-2.4250	[illegible]pr	2[illegible]pr

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds



DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5458-1.5482
Canada	1.4896-1.4906
Denmark	7.0070-7.0090
Euro	0.9424-0.9433
Hong Kong	7.7475-7.7480
Japan	119.70-119.75
Malaysia	3.8000-3.8001
Norway	7.7955-7.8015
Singapore	1.7130-1.7140
Sweden	8.4029-8.4117
Switzerland	1.5081-1.5091

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6060-1.6100
Australia dollar	2.4854-2.4878
Bahrain dinar	0.6000-0.6152
Brazil real*	2.7640-2.7840
Cyprus pound	0.8575-0.8789
Euro	1.5151-1.5177
Finland markka	8.9454-9.1083
Greece drachma	488.75-500.75
Hong Kong dollar	12.4502-12.4588
India rupee	68.03-69.75
Indonesia rupiah	13617.0-14317.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4860-0.4984
Malaysia ringgit	6.1077-6.1090
New Zealand dollar	2.9379-2.9422
Pakistan rupee	79.15 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.7975-5.9447
Singapore dollar	2.7533-2.7554
S Africa rand	9.6750-9.9268
U A E dirham	5.8475-5.9961

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	740	Kingfisher	16,692
ASDA Gp	26,827	Ladbroke	9,746
Abbey Ntl	2,676	Land Secs	1,769
Allnce & Leic	1,564	Legal & Gn	2,738
Allied Dom	6,133	Lloyds TSB	7,285
Allied Zrch	9,072	Marks Spr	16,057
Amvescap	1,562	Misys	2,032
AB Foods	1,979	Nat Grid	7,345
AstraZeneca	5,606	Nat Power	4,210

[illegible]

WALL STREET

[illegible]

Simmering trade war gets to the beef

You could not wish trade sanctions on a better chap. This week, America finally and legally imposed price-doubling tariffs on Bernard Arnault's Louis Vuitton handbags and the Gucci bags he is so determined to add to his collection. Even crocodiles will not shed tears.

The Border cashmere industry will not, after all, be sacrificed to a dispute over the EU's failure to import quite enough bananas from the successors of United Fruit. Sentiment and politics doubtless played a part. Mostly it was because the World Trade Organisation slashed the value of goods on which the US had pre-emptively imposed import bonds.

Lest anyone think that a two-way special relationship still exists, £14 million in UK exports of lead acid batteries, £7 million of bath preparations, £2 million of lithographs and smaller exports ranging from tea-makers to printed cotton bed linen are being hit by heavy US trade armoury. Britons' livelihoods will be lost while EU negotiators try to patch up a deal that is acceptable to American trade negotiators at the expense of Caribbean islanders and poor West African peasants.

One way or another, US banana multinationals will take over their business. Martin Bangemann, free to speak his mind as outgoing EU Industry Commissioner, dismissed the EU case in what Reuters called "language that may be offensive to some readers". The pass had been sold in past trade negotiations. Under WTO rules the US was right. That does not mean it had to nit-pick over those rules.

To satisfy open-walleted domestic political friends, America is prepared to impose punitive economic sanctions on the families of those with whom it is fighting wing-tip to wing-tip in the Balkans in common cause. Collateral damage will be done to innocent jobs, companies, investors and communities that have nothing to do with the banana rules. Even Serbia, Iraq, Iran and Libya have not imposed punitive economic sanctions on us in the past 25 years — if only because they would be ineffective. Neither the Foreign Office nor the DTI have acted to stop this happening, let alone to seek redress for companies on the original list that were wrongly penalised.

The trade game is hard. We had better get used to playing it as ruthlessly as the EU's farm interests have long done and as the US is now prepared to do. We are likely to see how hard in the five times bigger row over American beef.

The WTO has already ruled that there is no scientific evidence to justify the EU ban on imports of beef grown with hormones. US sanctions are set to hit $900 million of exports, from Essex raspberry jam to motorcycles, if the EU does not


GRAHAM SEARJEANT

comply by the WTO's May 13 deadline. Instead, the EU has just found hormones in the non-hormone beef we do allow in, the European Commission has called for a ban from June and claims that a health study will not be ready until the year end.

Expect war. But why? It is not as if trade war is a genuine part of the WTO regime. Only America and the EU are powerful enough to mount an effective attack and only these two plus Japan can resist one. So WTO rules permitting retaliation effectively apply only to the big three, plus China when it is allowed to join. Others have little power to redress wrongs.

The same imbalance is apparent in choosing a replacement for Renato Ruggiero, head of the WTO, who is due to retire on April 30. Although members theoretically elect the director general, an instant tradition of consensus has been invented. This effectively gives a veto to the US, or to the EU if its members could agree.

If one country is to have a stranglehold on the world trade order, America is the best, even if it may not seem that way when Washington is bilaterally bullying Japan or putting South Korea in its place via the IMF. An EU hegemony would be disastrous for free trade. But an imbalance of power is ultimately a recipe for conflict. It will grow more dangerous once China is a trade power.

After experience of the United Nations and its affiliates, America is rightly suspicious of repeating such nonsense in new bodies. If the WTO is to live up to its name, however, power and sanctions authorised under its regime should be more international.

If trade sanctions were exercised by the WTO rather than country to country, then smaller members would have a chance to protect their own interests. If fines were levied against governments, collateral damage to innocent businesses should also be avoided.

Key environmental and labour issues should also be dealt with via international WTO affiliates. That would ease battles that mix crude arguments about child labour or wildlife with individual members' direct trade interests.

When various forums are summoned by America for the next round of trade reforms, these issues should be at the top of the agenda. The world's most important trading nation is running a $200 billion trade deficit when economic logic suggests it should be running a current surplus.

For that reason alone, this is not the time for cool negotiations to liberalise trade further. It would not go down well, for instance, if developing nations challenged the Jones Act, which protects US coastal shipping and the associated shipbuilding yards.

The access of China, already almost agreed, inevitably in detailed bilateral negotiations with America, will present a huge challenge to the system. The WTO regime needs to be put on a better footing if that challenge is not to coincide with conflicts between the two most powerful blocs that could knock out the foundations of open trade.

Wall Street's legal eagles swoop on the Square Mile

Paul Armstrong on why top commercial lawyers are crossing the Atlantic

Did you hear the one about the London lawyer who prepared a will for an elderly female client? He charged her £200, but she accidentally paid him £300. This put the lawyer in an obvious moral dilemma. Should he tell his partners about the extra fee?

London lawyers have long been the butt of jokes among their fellow professional workers, but it seems that now even their US counterparts are starting to have a chuckle at the expense of some of them.

Top-tier Wall Street firms are starting to make themselves at home in the Square Mile, where the globalisation of legal services is at its most advanced. And while they may be yet to win a substantial slice of the market, there are growing fears about the impact they could have over the next five years.

"I think what people are worried about is not what the US firms are today but what happens next," says Maurice Allen, who heads the London office of US firm Weil, Gotshal & Manges. "It is a lot harder than we thought it would be, but the clever people realise that there is a strategic battle going on and that maybe the US people will get ahead of the English in that battle."

Much of the trend is being driven by the leading investments banks, which are seeking to exploit their new-found ability to structure deals under the law of almost any country. It just happens that, in the vast majority of cases, they opt for the British or US legal systems, depending on which is the most accommodating.

This has prompted many New York firms to hang up their shingle in London in the hope of winning business that would have otherwise left the Street. There is still a handful of US firms, such as Sullivan & Cromwell, for which US legal advice still accounts for the vast bulk of the work done in their London offices. But, increasingly, US firms operating in London have lawyers working in both jurisdictions.


The cast of the television show *LA Law*. Their ilk are already making a mark on the City

Members of the legal fraternity say the traffic is flowing both ways as London firms chase business from British investment banks wanting to construct deals under US law.

The push to expand law practices across the Atlantic has reached new heights with Clifford Chance, the British firm, in merger talks with Roger Wells, a medium-sized New York firm. Industry observers say it is only time before the top line firms attempt transatlantic mergers. But they believe that such industry rationalisation, which will also involve mergers of London-based firms, could still be several years away.

Alan Hodgart, a director of Hodgart Consulting, a leading management adviser to European law firms, said the investment banks stumbled across the advantages of structuring deals in the jurisdiction of their choice early this decade. But he said the practice has been adopted with increasing enthusiasm in the past five years.

"They worked out that if you are buying a business with offices in ten countries you can do the whole transaction under British or US law and just have lawyers on the ground in each place to clear up the local issues," Mr Hodgart said. "A lot of the second-tier firms realised they would lose work if they didn't do the same so there is a real market share race going on there as a consequence of these changes at the top."

He said some second-tier US legal firms that specialised in industries such as insurance had also been lured to London in the hope of taking market share from the local practitioners. Many of these firms had found the going tough. "You can justify moving abroad for many reasons but, at the end of the day, there has to be something that adds value for the client." Mr Hodgart said.

Figures published recently by *Commercial Lawyer*, the legal industry journal, showed that there were five US law firms operating in Europe with 100 or more lawyers each. A further six had more than 50. However, while these statistics highlight the potential for US firms to put pressure on their UK competitors, they are still a long way from the 1,000 or so lawyers employed by Clifford Chance.

Stephen Fiamma, who is the partner in charge at the London office of the US firm Jones Day Reavis & Pogue, says American companies are making it increasingly clear that they want to deal with only one law firm, regardless of where an acquisition is located.

But Mr Fiamma also gave warning that the London legal market was highly competitive and did not offer US firms an easy profit boost.

"At this point in the cycle any lawyer can do well if they are reasonably competent," he says. "The real test will be in the next downturn, when we will see how many have the staying power."

Mr Fiamma said some US firms had bought their way into the UK market by offering huge pay rises to leading lawyers from London firms. But he said many partners in these firms would be unwilling to sustain the tough times if they felt the money was coming out of their pocket.

"We have to compete with English lawyers. It is not like going into a market where the local lawyers can not get their shoe laces untied. This is also a very high overhead market compared with New York."

Mr Fiamma said some US firms could be risking a repeat of the mistakes they made in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when lawyers swarmed to London in the hope of capitalising on the start-up of the Common Market.

Bill Tudor John, senior partner at Allen & Overy, said the role of US firms operating in London had changed dramatically about three years ago. This was when they started employing lawyers to provide advice on English law. Until then, most of them had been restricted to offering advice in respect to US legal issues.

"That was a big change because it meant they were in direct competition," Mr Tudor John said. "But they are still relatively small in comparison with English firms."

Mr Hodgart says the only European business being won in significant amounts by US firms relates to project finance. Much of this work had traditionally flowed to London but was being intercepted by some of the big US firms. He also points out that some of the US firms were targeting the better lawyers employed at second-tier firms. In many cases they were offering to double their annual salaries of about £200,000 and giving them five-year contracts.

Hodgart said this was taking the UK firms' best fee generators, making it harder for them to recruit replacements and putting them in a vicious circle.

However, the US firms believed this was a better way to break into the London market than merging with another major firm or trying to build a business from the ground up.

He said this approach was also replacing the alliance concept of the 1980s, which made it impossible for firms to ensure their clients were given satisfactory service.

Spam leaves nasty taste for Net users

The problem of junk e-mail — known bizarrely in the computer industry as "spam" — is escalating. This is not only an irritation to computer users, but also a potential threat to all companies conducting business on the Internet.



The subject of spam has hit the headlines twice this week. The subject first came up on Monday when Virgin Net, the Internet access provider, said that it had become the first British company to take legal action against a so-called "spammer". The second came when Graham Watson, the Liberal Democrat MEP for Somerset and North Devon, delivered a petition to the European Parliament from 24,000 Internet users fed up with receiving junk e-mails.

Spam usually involves lone businessmen or start-up companies sending millions of unsolicited e-mails in one go. Typically the e-mails contain the kind of dubious offers more commonly found in the small-ads section of *Private Eye* magazine. Most recently, e-mail users have been offered the chance to invest in fictitious Internet companies.

The problem of spam has come about partly because it is so easy to get hold of e-mail addresses. Spammers can obtain addresses either using a software package or by purchasing e-mail addresses from customer research companies.

The biggest problem with spam is that it clogs-up the computer systems used by large corporations and Internet access companies, often causing them temporarily to shut down.

So far, the only way for companies to tackle the problem is to use so-called "filtration software", which can detect unsolicited e-mails and delete them before they enter their networks. However, such software rarely eliminates the problem, and spammers tend to be one step ahead of technology.

BiblioTech, another British Internet company, has also launched legal action against a spammer. The company, which is a rival to Microsoft's Hotmail and provides free e-mail addresses to 100,000 subscribers throughout Europe, was subject to a massive bulk e-mail campaign by an American businessman selling print supplies, such as ink cartridges for computer printers.

Chris Verdin, the company's finance director, argues that anyone who provides Internet access suffers as a result of junk e-mail. "The worst thing is that the recipient pays for it," he says. "Because you have to spend time online to download it."

☐ SOFTWARE that allows companies to manage the design, manufacture and maintenance of products has been launched this week by SAP, the German software group.

CHRIS AYRES

B2 bombs

I HEAR the last rites are being read at Barclays for the unloved B2 savings account. This is because the new Barclays symbol — the eagle within a kind of badge that resembles nothing so much as one of those plastic snowstorm toys, the Vauxhall logo, or possibly a "boy in a bubble" — will be used for every part of the company, with the probable exception of the Barclaycard.

B2, launched by Martin Taylor last May, will therefore join that sector of the banking graveyard haunted by the spirits of Vector, Orchard and Meridian — shortly to be joined, we can only hope, by the British Gas goldfish.

When B2 was launched, I said it wouldn't last. I was right. Mind you, I thought that Taylor would stick around.



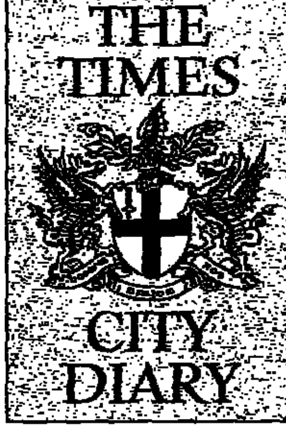
"With the eight-hour time difference we can now bill 32 hours a day."

BEFORE Bank of Scotland gets too cocky about yesterday's results, I have been contacted by a reader who says he has just received a piece of junk mail from its credit card department headed: "Win a trip to the Uefa Champions League final in Barcelona."

To go into the prize draw, all he has to do is answer one question. Which goes as follows: "Which city is the 1999 Uefa Champions League final being held in?"

Millar's tale

A RARE sighting of Andy Millar, the whistleblower who brought down British Biotech. At a presentation made at the Ernst & Young life sciences conference in Amsterdam this week, his name was flagged up on a slide as head of clinical



studies at Wilex, a German cancer therapy company.

The usually talkative Millar is not saying much, except to confirm that he is working as a consultant for Wilex and for Olaf Wilhelm, its chief executive.

In between legal skirmishes with his former employer, I assume. Millar says: "Wilex is a very interesting company and I'm flattered to be on board. It's a pity I can't get any work in this country."

Fresh start

ONLY days after the temporary monk, Jim O'Donnell, gave up the paths of the Lord to return to Mammon, I learn of another mid-life crisis in the City. Richard Broadbent, joint head of corporate finance at Schroders, is dropping out of the nine-to-five.

Broadbent — 46 and confusingly, no relation to his former boss Adam — surprised everyone when he resigned from the bank yesterday.

"He wants to do something else with his life," Win Bischoff, Schroders' chairman tells me. "He is going to take some time off and decide what he is going to do. He assures me he is not going to a competitor."

O'Donnell, who was at HSBC, spent just 18 months as a monk before kicking the habit and joining Salomon Smith Barney. I would not bet against Broadbent's eventual return either.

PURA FOODS, producer of food and cooking oils, yesterday slapped a writ on the mighty Shell organisation, producer of pious documents on corporate ethics, alleging trademark infringement and passing off.

The inedible oil company had launched its own Pura, a new make of diesel oil, earlier this year. The edible Pura alleges "tremendous embarrassment and confusion" which has necessitated the hiring of City solicitor Eversheds. The complaint is that its edible oil and Shell's diesel are both being sold under the same name. You mean there's a difference?

Polling boot

A RARE glimpse into the insecurities of political life from Lord, formerly Dr David, Owen, at the Reform Club for the launch of the first pamphlet from his New Europe pressure group.

The talk came around to the next election, and Owen said politicians were disinclined to trust the opinion polls. "Mrs Thatcher packed her bags in '83 and '87," he claimed. "I used to look up the vacancies in the British Medical Journal before every election."

MARTIN WALLER

city.diary@the-times.co.uk


Lord Owen: scanned the situations vacant columns

Businesslike approach is vital on internal controls

Nigel Turnbull on proposals for the way companies oversee their risks



Nigel Turnbull says reviews of controls must be firmly embedded in companies' operations

At the start of this decade, there was little formal guidance on corporate governance beyond that contained in company law. Then came the Cadbury Report, the Rutteman guidance on internal financial control, the Greenbury Report on directors' remuneration and, most recently, the Combined Code of the Hampel Committee. This week, another set of proposals, this time on internal controls broadly defined, has landed on boardroom table. *So why are they needed?*

In one sense, the answer is straightforward. When the combined code was published last summer, the Institute of Chartered Accountants agreed with the Stock Exchange that it would set up a working party to develop guidance to assist listed companies to implement the new requirements on internal control.

Principle D2 of the code calls on boards to "maintain a sound system of internal control to safeguard shareholders' investment and the company's assets", while a related code provision requires companies to review that system's effectiveness at least annually.

The underlying reason, of course, for the preparation of the guidance on internal control is that, as the wording of the principle highlights, it has a vital role to play in ensuring that a business is well run. That said, it complements, and is not a substitute for, entrepreneurship. In a market economy, profits are the reward for successful risk-taking and the role of internal control is to manage risk appropriately rather than to eliminate it. The nature of a group's principal risks will depend, for example, on the areas of the world in which it trades, on the industries in which it operates and on company-specific factors.

The working party has therefore sought to develop practical and robust guidance that groups can tailor to their individual circumstances. This is far better than imposing a one-size-fits-all set of detailed rules, though we recognise that it is not the easy option and is more challenging for directors and auditors. Moreover, the working party believes that the process for reviewing the internal control system should be firmly embedded in the group's ongoing operations and not treated as an exercise just undertaken for regulatory purposes.

The board may wish to delegate aspects of its review of effectiveness to, say, its audit committee, but it must form its own opinion on the review's overall adequacy. It is proposed that the board, or a relevant committee, should regularly review reports on control issues, probably on a cyclical basis in respect of different parts of the business. Factors to be considered include the key risks in the section of the business being reviewed and how they have been identified, evaluated and managed, the effectiveness of the related control system and whether weaknesses found are being remedied promptly.

In addition to the regular reviews, boards will need to undertake a specific annual review exercise ahead of the annual report being approved.

This should cover, for example, changes since the last review in the nature and extent of significant risks; the group's ability to respond effectively to change; the quality of management's ongoing monitoring of internal control; the incidence and impact of major control weaknesses and the effectiveness of the year-end financial reporting process.

In groups in which no internal audit function exists, the board will be expected to consider the need for one annually; similarly, if it does have such a function, it should review its remit, authority, resources and scope of work once a year.

Turning to disclosures, the working party is seeking to promote the provision of meaningful high-level information while avoiding voluminous detail that does not provide an insight to the company's approach to internal control.

Listed companies will be required to confirm that there is an ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the company's key risks, and that it is regularly reviewed by the board and accords with the guidance. As the guidance sets out very clearly the processes to be followed in maintaining a sound control system, this disclosure is at the same time both concise and powerful.

It is also proposed that companies should explain how the board reviewed the effectiveness of the review process and that when the board is unable to make either of these disclosures, it should explain what it is doing to rectify the situation.

To enable listed companies to make necessary changes to come into line with the new guidance, a phased implementation over the current and next accounting periods is proposed.

I would urge all boards of listed companies, their auditors and the users of their annual reports to read the proposals in full and to submit their comments by June 14.

Nigel Turnbull is chairman of the Internal Control Working Party of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales and finance director of Rank Group.

☐ *Copies of the proposal are available on www.icaew.co.ilk/internalcontrol.*

Monet proves the case for a little dash of grey in the executive picture

ROBERT BRUCE

IF ANYONE ever gets round to writing a history of business sponsorship of the arts, then the efforts of Ernst & Young will score highly on the success list. Their latest effort, the sponsorship of the Monet exhibition at the Royal Academy, came to an end last Sunday. It was the most popular art exhibition ever held in this country. Some 813,000 people saw it, and the Royal Academy took £3.9 million in ticket sales. And it was also a great critical, as well as popular, success.

However, for an "absolutely delighted" Ernst & Young, there were other figures to measure. More than 32,000 Ernst & Young employees and guests saw the exhibition, including more than 8,000 clients. This is the biggest success figure. To have access to such a massive "must-see" show, and for it to be an art exhibition, at which it is the most natural thing in the world to chat beforehand or as you go around the pictures, scores highly over any other type of business sponsorship.

And Ernst & Young ran it well. It was slightly eerie to find that as you left at the end of an evening viewing you could see another tranche of guests emerging from dinner in the floors above and moving down to take over your place in front of the water-lily ponds. The organisation was phenomenal.

However, for the accounting world, there was another lesson to be learnt from the exhibition. And it is rather an ironic one. The exhibition consisted entirely of Monet's work from this century. It revealed the work of a highly motivated, energetic and hard-working artist. The earliest work dated from the point at which Monet was aged 60. The last work dated from the last year of his life, when he was 86. The partnership deeds of the large accountancy firms ban anyone from remaining a partner over the age of 60. At the point where Monet was starting to produce some of his finest work, any senior accountant is being turfed out of the firm and told that productive life is over. On the new global board of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, John Connolly, the UK senior partner, is the oldest member. He is 48. Indeed, it is unusual to find any partner over the age of 55 still in anything approaching full harness in an accounting firm these days.

This trend is beginning to cause anxiety, particularly in America. For some years, it has been obvious that the average age of chairmen and chief executives is about a decade higher than that of the average partner who is providing their key advice. In the UK, and particularly in America, the average age of corporate chiefs is moving upwards. The gap in both culture and experience is beginning to cause concern.

Many factors are involved. This is the first generation that has had prosperity on such a scale that comparatively many people can afford to leave full-time work in their early fifties. The fashion is likely to change. The prospect of 30 years' leisure, however you fill it, will pall. There is a limit, however much you may relish the escape from phone, fax and laptops, to how many watercolours you can manage of the rolling Sussex farmland. Most people find the joys of retirement a bit of a mirage. In ten years' time, people will be craving to stay on and be productive, like Monet, until the day they drop.

There are also differences in style. The corporate world is far less pressured than that of professional service firms. Partners in law and accountancy firms work harder than their clients tend to in the corporate sector. So burn-out is a factor. So is the risk they run of working in a business where they take unlimited financial liability for anything going wrong. If you have done well, there must be an argument at 51 for saying: "Let's get out while the going is good".

Partners in audit work also face pressures with the quite recent introduction of the rule that only allows audit partners to stay in charge of a specific job for a fixed span of seven years. If you are going to have to give up your biggest client when you are within seven years of a mooted retirement date, you are likely to go at that point rather than stay.

"Once upon a time," a senior member of the profession said this week, "you could tell partners because they had grey hairs. Now they leave before they have got them." It is the old equation of knowledge and experience. For knowledge, you might prefer the doctor who is 45 and vigorously up to date. For experience, you might prefer someone of 60. Accounting firms argue differently. "At the age of 45 people have seen 20 years of the business," said one partner this week. "And they will still have seen two recessions."

However, the case for lengthening the career span is growing. In America, KPMG is looking to raise its retirement age. Firms will feel the pressure to encourage people to stay on. A proposal will go to the KPMG board in the UK on Monday about how the firm can keep the right people for the right reasons. The answer may well be to mix responsibilities later on so that partners can avoid exhaustion and maximise their value.

The irony of partners in professional firms marvelling at the productivity and imagination of an elderly Monet may not be lost after all.



The last day of Monet in the 20th Century, which took £3.9 million in ticket sales

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Tale of wisdom without peer

RUMOUR has it that Colin Sharman, the indefatigable knocker of heads together in his quest to make KPMG a truly global firm, has been wondering whether there is not an easier way of making a living. As international chairman, his role has not been a bed of roses. Curmudgeonly Canadians leading him a merry dance over the possibility of absconding to Arthur Andersen being but the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the problems of herding international partners all into the one organisation. So it comes as no surprise that Sharman has given some thought to imparting his business wisdom in a wider forum. It is said that he fancies a life peerage so that the nation can hear his thoughts more clearly from the House of Lords. Step forward the hopeful Lord Sharman of Teffont Magna.

Serious stuff

AT LAST. The news we have been waiting for. The Accounting Standards Board (ASB), and its sister bodies, the Financial Reporting Council and the Financial Reporting Review Panel, have launched their websites. But they can only be described as disappointments. They are clear, fast and packed with information. But where is the fun? Why is there no league scoreboard showing how the favoured football club of the ASB chairman, Sir David Tweedie, the penniless but entertaining Falkirk, is outgunning the financially challenged cloggers of Partick Thistle, the fancy of Ron Paterson of Ernst & Young, Tweedie's deadly technical oppo? Come to that, why is there not a page of Tweedie's famous jokes? It is all very well having an excellent technical summary of something such as FRS13, but accountants cannot live by bread alone.

Flying high

IT WAS a triumph for John Connolly at the great Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu global jamboree in London last week. Not only was he confirmed as new Deloitte & Touche UK senior partner and chief executive, but he was also made global managing partner for the assurance, accounting and advisory practices of the worldwide firm. That means he is in command of more than 60 per cent of the firm's international fees. Not bad for the Mancunian high-flyer known universally as "The Fat Controller" in his North Country days.

ROBERT BRUCE

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
ACM INVESTMENTS LTD				
0171 470 0100				
Short Dtd Gilt	137.50	141.00		
US Govt Bd (US$)	0.8497	0.8527	- 0.03	
Gilt Income	55.35	56.21	+ 0.07	5.30
Gilt Growth	101.30	102.90	- 0.10	
Sterling Bond	56.43	57.43	+ 0.12	5.50
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7888				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	149.11	157.65	- 0.38	
-do- MAV to Jun 19	145.58	145.58		
UK Equity Safeguard	119.11	127.40	- 0.14	2.91
-do- MAV to Mar 19	116.050	116.0506		
US Eq Safeguard	100.02	106.07	+ 2.23	
Cash	959.31	963.18		4.50
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	445.29	473.55	+ 0.03	1.09
UK Small Cos	97.62	104.40	- 0.34	0.31
FTSE 250 Index	116.84	124.96	- 0.12	1.66
Geared UK Index	*24.838	*26.2101	0.34	4.00
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	88.51	91.49	+ 0.12	5.11
Monthly Inc	44.17	47.241	- 0.03	7.59
International Funds				
American Gen	391.96	414.51	+ 7.23	
American Stlr	178.10	190.25	+ 3.49	
JG US Index	*31.093	*32.758	+ 0.58	4.50
European Gen	435.83	461.08	- 1.50	0.08
European Stlr	308.06	322.53	+ 0.66	
Japan Gen	129.48	137.08	- 1.67	
Asia Pacific	75.10	80.33	+ 0.15	1.40
Pacific Stlr	104.11	111.34	- 0.73	
Greater China	195.50	209.08	- 0.36	
Latin America	73.95	79.07	- 1.54	

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LAURENCE KEEN UNIT TRUST MGMT				
0171 600 8000				
Bridge Income #	407.88	433.92†	- 3.21	4.08
Esk Growth	145.41	154.69†	..	0.57
Inc & Growth #	108.17	115.07	- 0.15	2.50
Smaller Cos	132.50	140.96†	+ 0.91	1.35
Evn Spec Sit Inc	63.73	67.80	+ 0.16	1.90
Evn Spec Sit Acc	68.72	73.11	+ 0.17	1.90
Pension Growth	60.68	64.55†	+ 0.26	0.88
NM JOINT INVESTORS LTD				
01628 825867				
Balanced Fd #	1676.30	1700.10†	..	2.70
Income #	1342.00	1362.30†	..	3.80
MALDON UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0131 222 4242				
Maldon General	225.10	230.10†	..	2.86

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
VIRGIN DIRECT PFS LTD				
0345 959595				
Income Trust	119.73	119.73†	- 0.02	4.50
Peps Growth	158.76	158.76	...	.
Peps Inc Protct	133.19	133.19		
UK Index Tracking @	196.15	196.15†	- 0.13	1.30
For Whittingdale see ACM Investments				
WOOLWICH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0181 298 4000				
Intl Mgd	80.21	85.16†	+ 0.02	1.42
UK Stockmarket	160.80	171.10	+ 0.39	1.69
Corporate Bd Inc	52.66	53.02†	- 0.01	3.98
-do- Accum	61.42	61.81†	- 0.02	3.99

Source FT Information

* Yield expressed as CAR (Compound Annual Return). † Ex dividend; ‡ Middle price. .. No significant data. # Periodic charge deducted from capital. @ Exit charge

Modest losses at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

BANKS

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

BUILDING MATERIALS

CHEMICALS

CONSTRUCTION

DISTRIBUTORS

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

ELECTRICITY

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

ENGINEERING

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

HEALTHCARE

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

INSURANCE

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

LEISURE & HOTELS

MEDIA

PHARMACEUTICALS

MINING

OIL & GAS

OTHER FINANCIAL

PRINTING & PAPER

PROPERTY

RETAILERS, FOOD

RETAILERS, GENERAL

SUPPORT SERVICES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TRANSPORT

WATER

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

BRITISH FUNDS

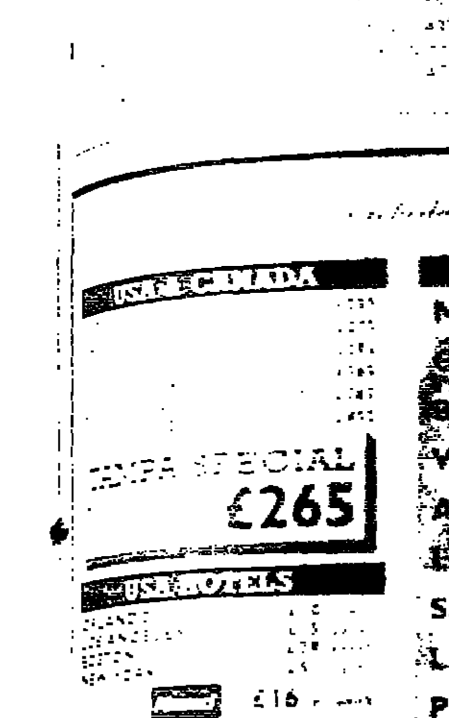
SHORTS (under 5 years)

LONGS (over 15 years)

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

UNDATED

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of 5% 3%





هكذا من الأصل

Bargains of the week: photograph the Lake District guided by an expert; cruise the Greek islands; take a trip through Uzbekistan



A selection of last-minute holidays and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and farther afield, many at bargain prices

BRITISH ISLES

TWO Cornish gardens — Trebah, with its sub-tropical plants, and Carwinion, with its bamboo collection — can be visited for half-price when booking dinner. B&B for £42 a night at the Falmouth Beach Hotel with Consort Hotels. Details: 01326 318084.

■ ABANDON the snows of the North East for the warmth of Jersey any Saturday for the next month. Return flights from Newcastle and three days' car hire will cost £99 with Jersey Travel Service. Details: 0181-891 6020.

■ THE Yorkshire Dales can be full of gambolling lambs or shrouded in mist at this time of the year. Should the latter happen, there will be the consolation of exploring Harrogate and its beautiful parks on an early May Bank Holiday coach tour with Andrew's of Tideswell. The trip starts from Derbyshire on May 1 and costs £99, including two nights' half-board. Details: 01298 871222.

■ VIEWS over the River Dart from a roof-top balcony are available from a luxurious house in Kingswear, South Devon. The house sleeps eight and is now on offer from £494 a week from Toad Hall Cottages. Details: 01548 853089.

■ TURNING views of the Lake District into classy photographs is the aim of a four-night break with Countrywide Holidays from May 3. Walks with an expert photographer, plus picnic lunches and dinner and B&B in Grasmere cost £187. Details: 01942 241432.

■ REVIVING memories of Britain's finest airmen and the conditions they operated under is possible on a tour with Whistler Breaks of former bases of RAF Bomber and Fighter Command in Lincolnshire. The tour from May 21 to 23 costs £220 with all meals, accommodation and entry fees. Details: 01743 718964.

EUROPE

CORSICA can be wild and beautiful, especially in the north in spring, and good deals to the region are now on offer, both starting on May 16. *Tony Dawe writes.*

An apartment in the hilltop village of Nonza on a rocky spur above the sea is available for a week with Voyages Ilena for £299, including direct flights from Gatwick and car hire. Details: 0171-924 4440.

Closer to the beach — at Moriani — are apartments costing £355 for a week with VFB Holidays, including return flights from Manchester and car hire. Details: 01242 240310.

■ TENERIFE is a more traditional destination, and a fortnight in apartments in Los Gigantes from May 2 costs £235, based on four sharing, with Lunn Poly including a return flight from Gatwick. Details from Holiday Shops.

■ GREECE and its islands continue to offer great early season deals, with a week's self-catering in Almirida, western Crete, from Tuesday costing £199 with Sunvil Holidays, with a flight from Gatwick. Fly from the same airport the next day and a week in apartments in Lindos, Rhodes, costs £109 with Olympic-Odyssey. Zakynthos for a week from May 2 costs £159 with Direct Greece, also with a Gatwick flight. Details: Sunvil, 0181-568 4499; Olympic, 0181-343 9090; Direct Greece, 0181-785 4000.

■ CRUISING through the islands is also available at discounts, with a week's trip from Athens on April 30 and May 8 costing £499 with Seafarer. The price includes flights from Gatwick and ports of call include Santorini, Mykonos and Tinos. Details: 01202 685500.

■ SKIING on into May at bargain prices will be possible with Crystal Holidays, which is offering B&B in Kaprun, Austria, and the chance to ski the Kitzsteinhorn Glacier between May 15 and 29. Prices start from £149 for three-night breaks and £189 for a week, with return flights from Gatwick. Details: 0181-399 5144.

■ PORTO SANTO, near Madeira, is one of the secrets of the travel trade. It boasts a five-mile strand, mountains, a few guest houses and a four-star hotel, which is available from Prestige Holidays for £518 for a week from early June with B&B and flights. Details: 01425 480400.


WORLD PICTURES

Northern Corsica: wild and beautiful, especially in spring

LONG HAUL

ST LUCIA'S jazz festival has become a big international event and this year, between May 8 and 16, the stars will include Ray Charles, Natalie Cole and Roberta Flack. Sovereign is offering a week's all-inclusive holiday at a four-star resort to coincide with the festival for £989, including flights. Details: 0161-742 2224.

■ BALI remains a dream destination for many and is available at an eye-opening price from Premier Holidays with flights from Gatwick between May 1 and 15. For example, 12 nights at the Raddin Hotel and the flight costs £669. Details: 01223 516677.

■ BIG APPLE breaks are available at special prices during the next two months with Bon Voyage. Fly from Heathrow and spend two nights in New York from £299. Details: 0800 316 0194.

■ MARKETS and Minarets is the title of a tour to the Silk Road cities of Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva with The Imaginative Traveller. The 12-day journey starts in Uzbekistan and costs from £735 with accommodation and an expert guide. Flights extra; availability in June. Details: 0181-742 8612.

■ AN ADVENTURE closer to home is possible with Encounter, which has places on 15-day trips through Morocco, starting on May 1 and 15. The High Atlas Mountains, the desert, beaches and the main cities will all be visited. Transport is by four-wheel-drive lorries and the £420 price includes food and activities. Flights are extra but can be arranged from £150 return. Details: 0171-370 6845.

■ NORTH AFRICA at a more sedate pace is proposed by Co-op Travelcare, which offers a fortnight's B&B First Choice holiday at a Tunisian resort for £139 if you make the flight from Manchester on Sunday. Details: 0541 500388.

● *Prices are per person and based on two sharing a room.*



See *The Times* on Saturday for more flight bargains and last-minute holidays

THEATRE
Ted Hughes's Tales from Ovid in Stratford
PAGE 40

THE TIMES
ARTS

MUSICALS
Backstage antics in the boyband zone
PAGE 41



NEW MOVIES: Depraved and disturbing it may be, but *8mm* holds a curious fascination for **James Christopher**

Bold Nic among the real devils

At once disconcerting and thoroughly entertaining, **8mm** tackles the darkest area of film: the snuff movie, the killing of a human being for pornographic entertainment. Such depravity may only exist in our imaginations. But that's precisely why this film provokes such strong feelings. Critics have been fulminating about bad taste and moral bankruptcy since Joel Schumacher's film opened in America last month. But Schumacher's only crime is to take this primal depravity and process it in exactly the same way that Hollywood has been processing its atrocities for decades — by encasing them in good old-fashioned thrillers.

It would be hard to invent a more moral private investigator than Nicolas Cage's well-spoken Tom Wells. Cage is sharp, scrupulously polite and he visits clients in a suit and tie. He has manicured nails, a loyal wife, a young daughter and a steady income. He couldn't be more boringly normal. It's the most unassuming role Cage has ever played, and he is utterly magnetic in it.

Summoned to a grand Pennsylvania mansion by the widow of a recently deceased tycoon, Cage is handed a reel of 8mm film in which a half-naked, terrified teenage girl is shown apparently being murdered by a man wearing a black leather mask. It's not Cage's usual beat but, sensitive to old money, he sets off to find out if the film is for real, and whether the girl, named Mary, is still alive.

On the surface, it's business as usual. Reputations have to be protected, discretions guaranteed and fat fees forthcoming. Peace of mind is what's at stake. But as Cage penetrates the neon underworld of the Los Angeles sex trade, his own peace of mind crumbles. The evidence leads him on a Dante-esque quest into a dehumanising hell of pornographic dungeons. His guide is Joaquin Phoenix's leather-trousered shop assistant. With his Puckish face and endless drollities, Phoenix provides a blast of divine comedy. He reads Truman Capote novels behind mucky magazines and cheekily tortures Cage about how porn messes with your head. Cage's features duly droop; phone calls to his wife grow increasingly strained.

But, having led us so wittily into a heart of darkness, Schumacher's film then becomes intoxicated by sensation, lurching like a drunk from one dank warehouse to another. A cast of deliciously sleazy villains (James Gadolfini, Peter Stormare and Chris Bauer) — pornographers all, with perverted minds, deranged egos and a wicked collection of evil-looking toys — pops up like old cartoons from the Batman serials Schumacher recently murdered. The playful metaphors become hammy.

The moment Cage drops his distance to become a Hamlet-style vigilante is the moment the film's credibility starts imploding. His motives make crude sense, but a gripping moral thriller gives way to an action movie. The devious plot, too, throttles the deviant issues raised by the serial chiller writer, Andrew Kevin Walker (who was responsible for *Seven*). That said, the flashy suspense never lets up. I'm probably on my own here, but I rather enjoyed it, warts and, well, more warts.

8mm Odeon Leicester Square 18, 123 mins *Nicolas Cage in thriller about snuff movies*
Besieged Curzon Mayfair PG, 92 mins *Sumptuous romance*
Message in a Bottle Warner Village West End 12, 132 mins *Corked romance with Kevin Costner*
Side Streets Plaza 15, 131 mins *Depressing trawl through NY's innards*
The Brylcreem Boys ABC Panton Street 15, 107 mins *Corny Irish war movie*
Out of the Present ABC Piccadilly U, 96 mins *Space documentary*
Dance With Me Virgin Trocadero PG, 126 mins *Cuban toe-tapper*
Misadventures of Margaret ABC Shaftesbury Ave 15, 92 mins *Fine cast commits adultery*



Straitlaced private eye Nicolas Cage gets a guided tour to the seamier side of life from Joaquin Phoenix in the frequently gripping thriller, *8mm*

Bernardo Bertolucci is no stranger to controversy, but his latest film, **Besieged**, is simply a gem. Taken from a short story by James Lasdun, the film charts the infatuation of a reclusive English pianist (David Thewlis) with his bewitching African cleaner (Thandie Newton). Newton, an impoverished medical student, earns her keep by scrubbing Thewlis's dilapidated palazzo in Rome. With his lopsided smile, huge nose and silly waggle of the head, Thewlis is the most nerdish romantic. Tight-lipped, middle-aged and lonely with it.

The first half hour is virtually wordless, but it's supremely eloquent. Newton maintains a formal distance: intensely vulnerable, effortlessly exotic. Her nightmare flashbacks to Africa reveal a husband who has been incarcerated as a political prisoner. An angry outburst on the marble spiral stairs that link, yet separate, Thewlis and Newton, results in the most subtle of blackmail. To prove his love, Thewlis quietly sells all he possesses to ransom her husband. It's the most quixotic of gestures, the most selfless of gambles. The cinematography is exquisite and the culture clash of music is as emblematic as you want it to be. Bertolucci has entered his vintage years. Don't miss out.

Milkmen from Land's End to John O'Groats will rue the day Luis Mandoki's **Message in a Bottle** was released in Britain. When Robin Wright Penn's nosy journalist discovers said bottle washed up on the beach, she uncorks a tear-jerking romance that sweeps her into the hairy arms of Kevin Costner's brooding boat-builder, Garret Blake. This is a low-salt, high-spend love story, rather more enamoured of the Maine coastline than it is of its stars.

Costner's widowed sceptic and Penn's supernaturally preserved journalist shift around each other like a couple of gawky adolescents. He is Heathcliffe in all but name; she is rather more successful as a hot water bottle than a therapist. Lost? Marooned more like. The best that can be said is that the story bobs along like the bottle, clunking into Paul Newman's recovering alcoholic who fiddles with boat engines and cuts up rough in the local diner. Costner makes smalltalk as enjoyable as breaking boulders. Penn oozes and gushes like the tide. The chunky knitwear speaks volumes.

Terence Ryan's **The Brylcreem Boys** is the most unbelievable piece of baloney. Here, under the twinkling eye of Gabriel Byrne's camp commander and the ludicrous scowl of Joe McGann's camp bastard, spiffing Allied troops and charmless German soldiers are interned together to underline Ireland's strict neutrality during the Second World War. Although separated by a barbed wire fence, the enemies enjoy the same privileges: day passes to the local races, shindigs in the local pub and for two of them — Bill Campbell's idealistic Canadian fighter pilot and Angus MacFadyen's plump, scar-faced German ace — a fight for the hand of Jean Butler's *Riverdance* farm-lass.

With mad ambition the film sets itself up as a tragic romance. The reality is *Dad's Army*, *The Great Escape* and the *Carry On* films pinned together with cod-Nazi accents, dusty stereotypes and clichés that make your toes curl in delighted disbelief. It's so awful it's almost magnificent.

Tony Gerber's **Side Streets** spends 24 hours exploring the crashed dreams of losers in New York's ethnic melting pot and, boy, does it dribble by. Art Malik's Indian taxi driver never gets paid by any of his fares. His tiny house has been taken over by his enormously fat brother, an ageing Bollywood idol (Shashi Kapoor). His harassed wife is a bowl of peanuts away from murdering the glamorous has-been. Valeria Golino's dress designer has no customers, and an eviction order. David Vadim's Romanian butcher boy gets locked in a freezer. John Ortiz's seedy Puerto Rican is mugged trying to impress his new teenage lover.

Gerber grimly stitches these non-stories into an excuse to avoid New York's back streets altogether. The acting is stringently unsympathetic, the film even more so. Ugh.

What kind of people aspire to manning a tin can in space designed by *Blue Peter* presenters? The answer can be found in Andrei Ujica's ultimate fly-on-the-wall documentary, **Out of the Present**. In 1991-92 two brave and uncomplicated Russian cosmonauts, Anatoli Arzebarsky and Sergei Krikalyov, spent months rattling around the Mir space station. On the one hand it's the Russian equivalent of *The Right Stuff*. On the other it's a serious account of endurance.

The calculated thrill is that the men who edited this video diary make the men who lived it entirely blind to the ironies of their mission. The astronauts are willing, childish participants. They listen to pop music, eat disgusting bags of food and frolic in a vacuum as if they were in a youth hostel for eggheads. The message is simple: space is utterly meaningless without the Earth, and what goes on on Earth is utterly meaningless in space.

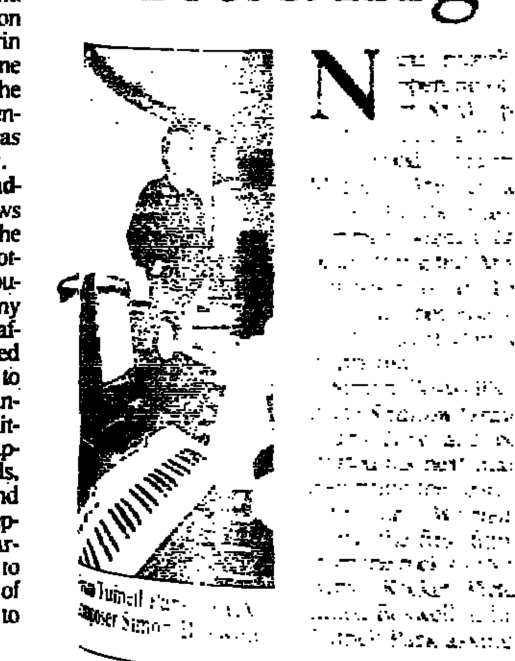
Dance With Me is a kitsch feast for *Come Dancing* enthusiasts with a little Latin heartache on the side. A chunky Cuban hunk, Rafael (the Latin American music star, Chayanne), washes mirrors in a dilapidated Texas dance studio for a motley band of hoofers: foxy Vanessa L. Williams, miscast Joan Plowright, raddled Kris Kristofferson (need we go on?). With a grin as wide as Havana, Chayanne sows Cuban magic in the hearts of these misfits. The sentiment is as choreographed as the salsa. It goes on for ever.

Brian Skeet's movie, **Misadventures of Margaret**, throws a classy young cast into the most dismal sex-obsessed potboiler. An impossibly chic couple, Parker Posey and Jeremy Northam, flirt with adultery after seven years of married bliss. She takes off to France to write a bodice-ripping sex fantasy. He quotes Walt Whitman to a busty student groupie in New York. Their friends, Elizabeth McGovern and Brooke Shields, polish their epithets on their crumpling marriage. It desperately aspires to be grown-up but the veneer of sophistication extends only to Posey's fabulous eyebrows.

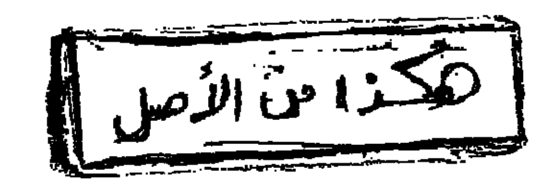
LINKS

WEBSITES:
8mm: www.sony.com
Message in a Bottle: www.message-bottle.com

TELEVISION:
Film 99 With Jonathan Ross: BBC1, Wednesday 11pm
Barry Norman's Film Night: Sky Premier, Sunday 9pm







Ready for your revival, Ms Bisset?

What becomes a legend most? In the case of Jacqueline Bisset, not being too proud to audition. **Martyn Palmer** reports

When Jacqueline Bisset sensed that the director Marshall Herskovitz couldn't decide whether to give her a key role in his period drama *The Honest Courtesan*, she decided to convince him. At 54, Bisset's track record — *The Deep*, *The Thief Who Came To Dinner*, *Bullitt*, *Rich and Famous* and François Truffaut's *Day For Night* among more than 50 films — should speak for itself. But the British actress, who has lived in California since the late 1960s, is a realist when confronted with the Hollywood system she knows so well.

"They were thinking of me for *The Honest Courtesan* and I had a meeting with the director and I could tell they were looking at other people, too," says Bisset. "I sensed that they were looking for a bigger name, someone who is more current, someone from a hot TV series, whatever. And I was getting very frustrated by the whole thing.

"So I said to myself: 'I'm perfectly good for this role and I know that I can be really great in this part. I can't think of anyone else who could do it better.' So I put together a piece of film to show him. I did a monologue, related to the character; I dressed myself up so I wouldn't look contemporary. I put together something that looked period-ish; I put a piece of string around my forehead, I found a blouse and a corset and I played dress-up. I sent him the film and it worked. I got the part."

Bisset may be a realist but she forces herself to be an optimist, too. While other actresses of a certain age bemoan their lot and rightly point out that decent roles for older women are as rare as snowflakes in Santa Monica, she has her own, very positive, mantra.

"There is all this talk that beyond a certain age it is difficult for actresses, but I refuse to accept that. I mean, I just hate that phrase 'a certain age' and it annoys me when in every interview you read everyone is whining on about this, that and the other.

"I make myself be positive. I say 'OK, you are bloody lucky to be working. Why are you working? Because you have a good attitude. Get rid of the rubbish and remember there are thousands of people who would love to have this job and get on and make the best of it. It will be terrific.' And it usually is."

In recent years, after a lean spell during her forties, things have certainly been terrific for Bisset's career. Since making *The Honest Courtesan* almost two years ago — its release was delayed because of distribution problems — she has completed six more films, including two for TV, back to back.

"I've worked in France, Australia and Czechoslovakia, as well as the States. It's been very positive. I have energy and I want to work with the people I find interesting and on worthwhile projects. I don't need to do enormous parts, I was never attracted to them, but I do like to work."

> 'I really hate to hear that phrase: 'a certain age''

In *The Honest Courtesan* she was able to find an outlet for some of that hard-edged realism in the role of Paola Franco, a mother who knows that her beautiful daughter Veronica (Catherine McCormack) will never be allowed to marry the handsome young aristocrat (Rufus Sewell) she has fallen in love with because of her lowly social standing.

Instead, she reveals to Veronica that she was once a courtesan, a beautiful escort who provided sexual favours for the richest and most powerful men in 16th-century Venice, and she encourages her daughter to follow the same path. Bisset was intrigued by the subject-matter — a mother basically pimping for her daughter — and feels that Paola is trying to help her child in the most practical way.

"I like period pieces and I hadn't done anything from this time before," she says. "And the subject did fascinate me, the whole business of the courtesans and the relationship between the mother and daughter.

"I believe that it's important that people who have children should pass on what they know and that's what Paola is doing. Paola knows that her daughter has to face reality. She can become a nun or she can become a courtesan."

Bisset believes it is a theme that is still relevant today. Born into an upper middle-class family in rural Berkshire, Bisset remembers that her own parents — her mother was a lawyer before marrying her late father, a GP — were not from a generation about to pass on tips about sex and men, although they did give her many positive values to take into the world.

"I was given a great deal by my family in terms of education but I wasn't given anything practical like this. God, it would have been amazing to have known stuff about men instead of struggling and not having a clue and frequently feeling racked with guilt about things. Personally, I was in between two very different generations; my parents came from a generation where discipline was prevalent and then I was growing up in the Sixties which was the exact opposite.

"And I feel that everything that I was taught at school is now irrelevant; pounds, shillings and pence, miles and yards, things like that, have all gone. What remains strong in me is what my parents taught me: my manners, my sense of the world through them, through reading the books around the house, rather than anything I learnt in a history lesson."

After leaving school, Bisset worked, briefly, as a model and then won a small role in *The Knack* directed by Richard Lester, a knockabout comedy set in swinging Sixties London. She was spotted by Roman Polanski who cast her in his black comedy *Cul de Sac* and, in the same year, she made *Day for Night* with Truffaut. Soon Hollywood was beckoning.

Once named as the most beautiful woman in the world, Bisset is still striking. There are a few lines around those deep, sea-green eyes, but her body is in peak condition thanks to a disciplined routine of diet and exercise and, she says, that positive outlook on life.

"I think I do have a healthy attitude. I know when I don't work I sometimes get morbid but I think most actors are like that. But what I'm happy about is that I'm not freaking out about getting older.

"I mean I come to stay at a nice hotel and I see the strawberry jam, the whipped cream and the scones, or whatever, and I can't resist — and I don't want to resist — but I know that I will have to pay. But I get on that damned treadmill and I sweat and then I feel like taking on the world. I do that five times a week and it gives me that bit of an edge and, occasionally, allows me to eat some of the things I wouldn't be able to eat if I didn't do it."

She has never married but there have been several well-publicised love affairs, notably with the Russian ballet dancer Alexander Godunov, who died following an alcoholic binge shortly after they split up. For the past five years she has been living with Emin Boztepe, a Turkish-born martial arts expert.

She arrived in Hollywood at the age of 23 and was planning to stay for just three weeks. Although she makes frequent trips back to London to see her mother, she has lived in California ever since. "I had no intention of staying," she says. "I was going to be there for three weeks and then come home. Then I fell in love with someone and that was it. And, of course, there were things that I really liked about being there; the light, for instance, gave me a great sense of energy after growing up in a dark house in cold and rainy England. And I wanted to move away from the traditional. I wanted to stop being an introvert."

At that time, cinema was entering a highly creative period. The new breed of directors — Coppola, Lucas, Polanski, Scorsese — were breaking through. "I didn't know anything about them," she laughs. "I didn't know a thing about anybody. I was busy learning how to be a woman. But it was a good time for me. When you leave a place like London and go to a place like California was then, not nearly so sophisticated, you have to work much harder on yourself.

"But if you have a lively mind you have to do it yourself. Whereas if you stay in a place like London, where it's all there, you could turn into a sponge. You could just become one of those women who just go to good restaurants, swan around and go to parties and wake up having lost your looks and not knowing a damn thing. I never wanted that . . ."

● *The Honest Courtesan opens in Britain on April 30*



GREG GORMAN/LIAISON

Jacqueline Bisset: "What I am most happy about is that I'm not freaking out about getting older"

Heading for Hollywood

Composer Simon Boswell is making his name in movies, says **Paul Nathanson**



From Tufnell Park to LA: ***composer Simon Boswell***

Next month sees the opening of yet another Shakespeare movie, this time getting the full Hollywood treatment with Michelle Pfeiffer and Kevin Kline. But the music for *Midsummer Night's Dream* will be anything but American: the composer is an Englishman who has become one of the most sought-after composers in cinema.

Simon Boswell's credits include *Shallow Grave* and *This Year's Love* and he has just started his next major project, co-writing the score with Elton John on *Women Talking Dirty*, the first film emerging from the rock star's movie company, *Rocket Pictures*. John called Boswell at his studio in Tufnell Park asking him to fly out to Los Angeles to help to create something "modern and radical" for the drama starring Helena Bonham Carter. Tim Roth and Ewan McGregor have both chosen Boswell, who also wrote the music for the BBC drama *The Lakes* for which he was nominated for a Bafta, to write the music for their first movies as directors — *The War Zone* and *Tube Tales*, due later this year.

Michael Hoffman, *Midsummer's* director, asked for something "with wit and beauty and mystery and magic and yearning and strangeness and romance and intelligence and sophistication and simplicity and sensibility and humour". Boswell obliged by translating this into medieval music and Persian rhythms played on ancient Roman instruments.

Roth's remit was completely different for his raw study of incest: *The War Zone*'s music was cut back to the minimum. "We were determined not to sensationalise as we wanted to avoid being sentimental and leading people's emotions," says Boswell. "It was about repressing emotion rather than amplifying it."

Boswell's initiation into movie music was bizarre. While in Rome playing in a rock band in the mid-1980s, he met the art house horror film director Dario Argento at a party. Argento had seen him perform and asked him to do the music for *Creepers*, which he was then shooting. In the studio the next day Boswell was horrified to find that the scene he was given to score depicted a decapitation. He composed the musical equivalent of nails scratching a blackboard — violin harmonics accompanied by a plectrum scraping down the bass string of an electric guitar. The director declared the music "beautiful".

Boswell, a friendly 45-year-old, is neither a movie buff nor did he train as a composer. In fact he read English at Cambridge, which he feels was more useful to his present job. "Much of the work is about understanding scripts and the undercurrents, symbolism and imagery," he says. "You need to understand what the director is suggesting and it's all about communication and interpretation. You can nursemaid people through a film thematically. For example, watch a horror movie without music and it's not frightening, though it may be gruesome. But add the music and you add tension.

"Today film music has reached a very bad point where so much underlines every cut and treats the audience like idiots. If you notice the music in a film the composer isn't doing his job."

Glam acting

NEW RELEASES ON VIDEO

■ **VELVET GOLDMINE**
Film Four/VCI, 15, 1998
WITH Seventies British glam-rock as the subject, you expect exciting if bloated music, androgynous caperings, and visual dazzlements galore. American indie director Todd Haynes gives us all this, though the needlessly complicated script makes it hard to get pulled in emotionally. Jonathan Rhys Meyers plays the central figure, a Bowie-esque performer called Brian Slade whose career shrinks to vanishing point. But it's Ewan McGregor, as an audacious American rock star nearly obliterated by drugs, who performs with enough force to break through the frenzy. Toni Collette also impresses as Slade's wife. A rental release.

■ **MARY, MUNGO AND MIDGE**
Kult Kidz, U, 1969
A NEW video label devoted to cult children's TV from the day before yesterday gets off to an eye-popping, joyful start with three 15-minute adventures from the short-lived animation series drawn by John Ryan, creator of *Captain Pugwash*. Mary is human, Mungo's her dog, and Midge is a mouse. They live on a tower block's eighth floor in a world that now looks as bright and Pop-Arty as a Patrick Caulfield painting. Great fun.

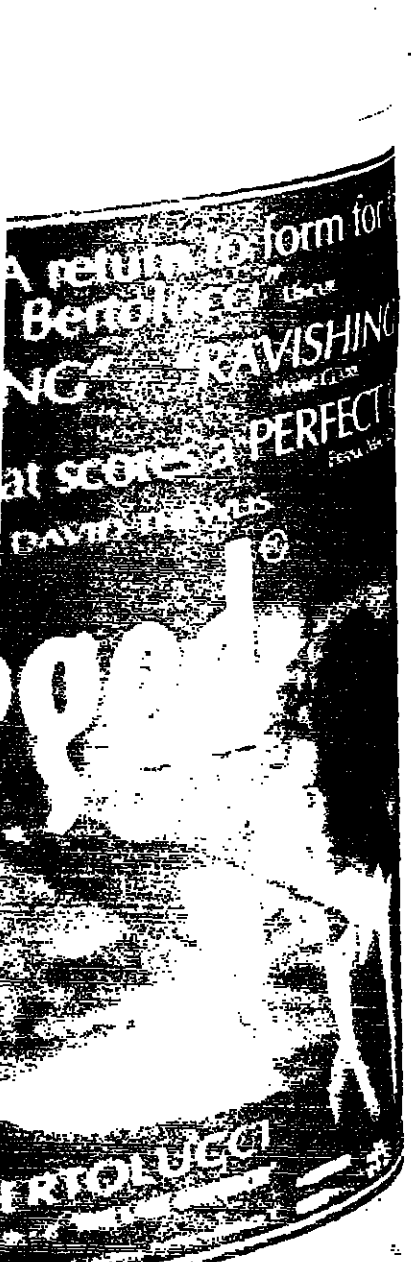
■ **OEDIPUS REX**
Tartan, 15, 1967
NOT among the most persuasive films of its director Pier Paolo Pasolini, though his forthright, visceral approach to Sophocles' tragedy brings assorted pleasures and jolts. The bulk is strikingly filmed against the Moroccan desert, with Franco Citti groping towards his destiny, hands over his eyes. A modern epilogue unfolds in Bologna. As usual Pasolini tries a difficult balancing act, juggling ancient myth with modern relevance. Silvano Mangano's forceful contribution as Jocasta helps.

■ **A PERFECT MURDER**
Warner, 15, 1998
YOU can rent this remake of *Dial M for Murder* on video, or buy or rent on DVD. The latter format is preferable, partly because the extra features (two audio commentaries; an alternate ending) help to turn an otherwise mundane affair into something mildly interesting. Michael Douglas is the commodities trader who invites his wife's bohemian lover (Viggo Mortensen) to execute the perfect murder. Gwyneth Paltrow swans around as the wife in peril. Alas, none of the characters engages our sympathies, although the technicians' commentary is interesting.

■ **THANK GOD HE MET LIZZIE**
Fox Pathe, 12, 1997
YOU'D have thought Cate Blanchett's presence in this thin but likeable Australian comedy would have pushed it out into the cinemas here. Instead, it stays on video. The star of *Elizabeth* plays Lizzie (who else?); and the general celebrations on her chic wedding day get shaken up by the groom's worrying memories of an earlier, jollier relationship with working-class Jenny (Frances O'Connor). A rental release.

GEOFF BROWN





■ **LISTINGS**
Kureishi at the National

ARTS

■ **MUSIC**
Ancient Music gala

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

SLEEP WITH ME: Penny Downie, Jonathan Hyde and Adrian Lukis star in Hanif Kureishi's tragi-comic satire exposing the chaotic lives of a group of friends. Anthony Page directs. **Cottesloe** (0171-452 3000). Opens tonight, 7pm. In repertoire.

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA: The acclaimed Schumann specialist Christian Thielemann leads the PO for the second time this season. Top of the evening's programme is Schumann's exuberant *Konzertstück* followed by Brahms's Symphony No 4 and Mozart's Violin Concerto No 3, K216, with Christian Tetzlaff as soloist. **Festival Hall** (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm.

THE CUCKOO AND THE NIGHTINGALE: Another Nazi faces interrogation, this time Rudolf Hess quizzed by his Spandau guard in Don Hood's two-hander. **New End, NW3** (0171-794 0022). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

SONGS GALORE: Returns only for this recital in which the silver-timbred Danish soprano Inger Dam-Jensen gives her first solo performance here. A radiant programme includes songs by Schubert, Grieg, Nielsen and Strauss. The excellent Roger Vignoles accompanies on the piano. **Wigmore Hall** (0171-935 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm.

Christian Thielemann conducts at the RFH

ELSEWHERE

COVENTRY: In Alex Jones's new comedy *Phil and Jill and Jill and Phil* an unappreciated wife and her chauvinist husband are sex-changed by a magic potion. **Belgrade** (01203 553055). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

EDINBURGH: Eminent conductor of period music Frans Brüggen takes the baton with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Chorus in this performance of Bach's glorious Mass in B minor. A starry line-up of soloists includes Emma Kirkby, soprano, Catherine Wyn-Rogers, alto, James Oxley, tenor and Neal Davies, bass. **St Mary's Cathedral** (0131-668 2019). Tonight, 7.45pm.

WATFORD: Cathryn Harrison and Marty Cruikshank in Eileen Atkins's much-admired *Vita and Virginia*, based on the letters between V. Sackville-West and V. Woolf. Maria Aitken directs. **Palace** (01923 225671). Opens tonight, 7.45pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

■ ***MAMMA MIA!:*** Enjoyable musical tells a tale of three fathers of a bride, to steer a barmy way through a torrent of Abba hits. Siobhan McCarthy and Lisa Stokke play mother and daughter on the eve of the girl's wedding. Phyllida Lloyd directs. **Prince Edward** (0171-447 5400).

□ **ESCAPE FROM PTERADACTYL ISLAND:** Award-winning American musical based on the genre of early sci-fi novels, with new rock'n'roll songs from Michael Jeffery. **Pleasance Theatre** (0171-609 1800).

□ **SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER:** Sheila Gish plays the venomous mother and Rachel Weisz the traumatised niece in the famous Tennessee Williams shocker. Sean Mathias directs. **Comedy Theatre** (0171-369 1731).

□ **MAKING NOISE QUIETLY:** Dominic Dromgoole's Oxford Stage Co opens a London season with Robert Holman's trilogy of short plays where strangers meet at a time of war. Eleanor Bron heads the cast. **Whitehall Theatre** (0171-369 1735.

□ **HAMLET:** Paul Rhys plays the prince in Laurence Boswell's production. With Donald Sumter as Claudius. **Young Vic** (0171-928 6363).

□ **THE GIN GAME:** Dorothy Tutin and Joss Ackland play old folk in a retirement home whose card-playing styles echo their sad lives. **Savoy** (0171-836 8888).

□ **HUSHABYE MOUNTAIN:** Jonathan Harvey's bittersweet comedy about a relationship broken by Aids. Some scenes set in Heaven, where Judy Garland welcomes the dead partner. **Hampstead** (0171-722 9301).

□ **THE DISPUTE:** Superb production by Neil Bartlett of his translation of Marivaux where four imprisoned adolescents meet the world and each other for the first time. **Lyric, W6** (0181-741 2311).

□ **THE GARDEN OF HABUSTAN:** Besht Tellers performs Rebecca Wolman's play. Ancestral ghosts try to explain today's disputes between Palestinian and Israeli. See review, right. **Tricycle** (0171-328 1000).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

AN IDEAL HUSBAND (PG): Oliver Parker's sumptuous homage to Wilde's ever-fashionable play is hijacked by Rupert Everett's madly charming Lord Goring. With Jeremy Northam and Cate Blanchett.

HAPPINESS (18): Poisonous but gripping black comedy about dismal urban attempts to find happiness. Todd Solondz's film walks an original, edgy line between fantastic humour and ghastly habits.

RETURN TO PARADISE (15): Joseph Ruben's crisis of conscience film is only a fitful suspense about two American buddies who face years in a Malaysian prison if they return to help their condemned buddy. With Vince Vaughn and Anne Heche.

PROMETHEUS (15): Tony Harrison's dense film-poem is a work of surreal genius and endless layers. Michael Feast is compelling as Zeus's flunky who looks at what we have achieved and destroyed with his stolen fire.

ACTRESSES (15): Three famous Catalonian stage actresses stir up old jealousies. Too stagey, too self-conscious, with the dramatic impetus of a slug. A static self-indulgent piece by Ventura Pons.

CURRENT

A CIVIL ACTION (15): Meaty courtroom drama with John Travolta and Robert Duvall in sparkling form as two sharks in a multi-million dollar case about toxic dumping. Steven Zaillian directs.

BEDROOMS & HALLWAYS (15): Playful romantic comedy about male bonding with Simon Callow splendidly miscast as a heterosexual New Age Svengali. Rose Troche directs.

THE FACULTY (15): Fishy sci-fi chiller with high comedy quota from Kevin Williamson, the scribe behind Scream. A faculty of schoolteachers get taken over by alien squids from outer space. Director Robert Rodriguez flogs the creeping paranoia with seat-clutching wit.

SLAM (15): Saul Williams puts in a sensational performance as a black rap poet caught up in the Washington prison system. A gritty documentary-style film by Marc Levin.

HIGH ART (18): Ally Sheedy and Radha Mitchell spread lesbian gloom and doom in an upmarket photographic magazine. Drugs, decadence and Fassbinder fail to illuminate Lisa Cholodenko's constipated melodrama.

Mythic feast of Father Ted

THEATRE

Tales from Ovid
Swan, Stratford

So the world is in some sense ruled by reason? That was what Pentheus thought, and Pentheus was wrong, not only about others, but about himself. As Ovid recorded in about AD10 and Ted Hughes repeated with lyrical savagery in 1997, Pentheus was half-mad with vindictive emotion. "Something insane behind his eyes tore off its straitjacket"; and, raging at Bacchus and his worshippers, he stormed up Mount Cithaeron, where his head was torn off by his mother.

That is one of ten stories Tim Supple and Simon Reade have extracted from Hughes's slimmed-down version of the 250 tales in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; and it is by no means their most daunting illustration of the intensity of human passion. That accolade goes to the tale of Tereus, whose desire for his sister-in-law Philomela was so overpowering that he imprisoned and raped her and cut out her tongue, assuming this would ensure her silence. How mistaken he was. To tiny, queasy moans from the Swan audience, Mark Bonnar's swaggering Tereus ends up munching a yellow ragout made out of the innards of his son, killed by a wife so consumed with revenge that "good and evil, right and wrong, forgot their differences".

I cannot imagine anyone exiting this millennium in an especially smug mood, but, if anyone is, Supple's work might give him or her a salutary churning. He is a director with a huge interest in the collective unconscious, and especially its more unconscionable aspects. But his *Grimm Tales* and *More Grimm Tales*, though they included their quota of oven-baked witches and ugly sisters blinded by birds, can scarcely compete with the *Metamorphoses* when it comes to imaginative scope and metaphysical size. If your own or someone else's desire does not destroy you, some god is all too likely to punish your frailties by transforming you into a spider or some temple steps.

Supple's other knack is for bringing old stories vividly to life by the sparest means. The props he uses on a near-bare Swan stage are streamers, scarves, rags to suggest Pentheus's ripped-out arms, a rope to indicate the bounds of Narcissus's pool, rough binding-cloths for the bark that encircles Sirine Saba's distraught Myrrha, who is turned into a tree after letting herself be overwhelmed by her lust for her father: but it is enough. The ten-person RSC cast is not as physically adroit and inventive as its *Grimm* counterparts, but it brings an exhilarating energy to the task of reminding us of our mythic heritage.

And what a heritage! Doubtless Supple and Reade could have picked their key tales differently — where are the Creation legends? — but they still give us a satisfying variety. Part One, in which Sam Dastor's fine, grave Tiresias and Fergus O'Donnell's indolently voluptuous Bacchus are the dominant figures, brings onstage Echo and Pentheus, Arachne and poor, pulverised Semele. Part Two has its relaxed moments, notably when Antony Byrne's Midas is developing his gold-phobia or earning his asses' ears, but these are more than balanced by Tereus and Myrrha and even Salmacis, the stalker-nymph whose obsession with Hermaphroditus ends up by fusing him and her into a swirl of off-white muslin and naked bodies. The sponsors Laphroaig have been well repaid.

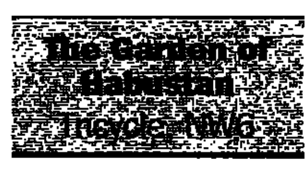
BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

DONALD COOPER



Ancient Romans, modern morals: Fergus O'Donnell (Bacchus, centre) and Antony Byrne (Midas, bottom right) in Tim Supple's fine adaptation

My land, your land



The Garden of Habustan
Tricycle, NW6

At the beginning of Rebecca Wolman's new play about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the three actors emerge Eden-like from the ground, winding themselves around the branches of a starkly-lit fig tree. It is a fitting start to a play which reminds us that none of us has an absolute claim to the land we briefly inhabit, and which is notable throughout for a strikingly effective economy of image and action.

Told by Wolman's own company, Besht Tellers, through a closely-woven mix of narrative, dramatisation and symbolism, *The Garden of Habustan* plays out in miniature the disputed land claims that lie intractably at the heart of the conflict. The story, as it gradually but clearly emerges, turns around a young Israeli named Yoni (Jalaal Hartley). On the eve of Yoni's conscription into the army, an old Palestinian man, Abu Deeb (George Savvides), appears in his garden clutching the dismembered remains of his grandson. They spring at each other with instinctive mistrust; but when he learns that Abu Deeb's past is inextricably linked to his own, Yoni starts to question the stark simplicities of the worldview inherited from his aggressively Zionist grandfather.

Wolman's script is finely balanced: though the focus is on the Jewish family she gives equal weight to the claims and grievances of both sides. She also has an Israeli playing a Palestinian and a Greek Cypriot playing a Palestinian and an Israeli, which makes its own theatrical point. The play ponders the meaning of concepts like courage, terrorism and home, but it avoids simplistic bromides and is leavened by plenty of humour and domestic detail.

All three actors are physically eloquent and movingly empathetic, though Savvides could have more confidence in some of his lines. But the stand-out performance comes from Alit Kreiz, who plays three generations of Israelis as well as a young Arab girl with beautifully articulated variations on the theme of feisty but resigned charm.

I found the first half more sure-footed than the second. But Wolman directs with a lightness of touch that only briefly threatens to over-burden itself with symbolic meaning. On the tiny climbing-frame of a set, simply and effectively designed by Sue Mayes, she throws a dancing light of vivid moments which find their own organic, almost sensuous rhythm, amplified throughout by music from the jazz saxophonist Theo Travis.

NIGEL CLIFF

Party with a purpose

CONCERT

AAM Gala
St John's

As *Semele* opened at ENO, the Queen of Sheba was making her entry at Smith Square. Her arrival, on London's glorious night of Handel, came in a gala in aid of the Thomas Coram Foundation for Children, to mark the 250th anniversary of Handel's first benefit concert for Coram's Foundling Hospital "for the Maintenance and Education of Exposed and Deserted Young Children".

Times do not, alas, change; but neither did the music. This concert was a reconstruction of that original. The programme text was a facsimile of the original: the programme notes — some of them — were Handel's own. And the evening was presented by the Academy of Ancient Music. It was characteristic of the spirit of the enterprise that the anniversary of the concert threatened to upstage the other great Occasion: the 25th anniversary of the AAM itself.

From Purcell's *Dido* to Schubert's *Trout*, and on to Tavener the AAM has brought together an extraordinary range of specialist musicians in its 25 years of pioneering what its founder Christopher Hogwood calls "historically informed performances". Since conductor Paul Goodwin and violinist Andrew Manze joined in 1996, a new and lively chemistry has been at work. It was effervescing thrillingly on Monday as Goodwin conducted the excerpts from *Solomon*, with Paul Agnew and James Bowman offering virtuoso solo contributions; and as Manze directed a performance of Handel's Op 6 Concerto Grosso in A in which his own cadences and cadenzas seemed to magic the music back to its Italian (and even pre-Italian) roots.

These works were flanked by two comparative rarities, both conducted by Hogwood: *The Anthem on the Peace*, written for the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle proclaimed in London in 1749; and *The Anthem for the Foundling Hospital*.

Both are cut-and-paste jobs, recycling music from *Messiah* and elsewhere. Some cutting, some paste! The New College Oxford choir relished Handel's metamorphosis of *How beautiful are the feet* before Emma Kirkby bestowed the "blessing of peace". And at the end the *Hallelujah Chorus*, no less, rang out from an age when it was barely known.

HILARY FINCH

■ OPERA

Genesis of Paul Bunyan

■ CLASSICAL CDS

Great Puccini singers

Britten's duet with a poet

As the Royal Opera revives Benjamin Britten's *Paul Bunyan*, **Mike Ashman** looks back at the stormy friendship with W.H. Auden that sparked the work

A "most surprising day", wrote the 22-year-old Benjamin Britten in his diary towards the end of April 1935. "I am booked to do the music to a film on the new Jubilee Stamp . . ."

A keen cinemagoer who enjoyed both Walt Disney and Hitchcock, Britten took naturally to the tight working disciplines of film music, and his new employer, the GPO documentary film unit, soon offered a second project. Britten was driven to Malvern to meet the commentary writer for *Coal Face*, a 28-year-old school master and poet called Wystan Auden. The composer thought him "the most amazing man, a very brilliant and attractive personality". Auden found Britten "extremely young" but, when he heard Britten's setting of his lyrics, was fired by "his extraordinary musical sensitivity in relation to the English language".

The meeting initiated a close professional and personal relationship — significant to Auden, vital to Britten — but one that would last barely seven years. They collaborated on *Night Mail*, where Britten accompanied Auden's galloping onomatopoeic verse ("This is the night mail crossing the border/Bringing the cheque and the postal order") with music employing "compressed steam, sandpaper and miniature rails". Then they parodied the whole documentary genre in *The Way To The Sea*, a mock epic treatment of Southern Railways' new express to Brighton.

Britten also provided the music (including a terrific blues) for two of the plays Auden wrote together with Christopher Isherwood for the left-wing Group Theatre. There were experimental radio documentaries and a big concert work, *Our Hunting Fathers*, which used man's treatment of the animal kingdom to symbolise the worsening political situation in 1930s Europe. In the audience sat Frank Bridge, Vaughan Williams and Britten's much loved mother, all interested, critical and slightly shocked.

Auden provided Britten with verse for cabaret songs and more serious statements. Britten actually set to music two poems almost certainly written to encourage him to be more open about his emotional and sexual feelings. "We were extraordinarily interfering in this respect," remembered Isherwood; Auden (in a mock will) even penned the lines "for my friend Benjamin Britten, composer, I beg/that fortune send him soon a passionate affair".

Fortune was soon to send both men a passionate affair — and a long journey. Auden was an inveterate traveller in search of political and intellectual action. He moved to New York in January 1936 and met the young student Chester Kallman ("Mr Right has come into my life"). That summer Britten, in part following Auden's lead, reached New York with Peter Pears.

Although always aware of music, Auden had been brought up "to think that opera was impossible". But Kallman loved opera and made a thorough convert out of his new friend. The timing was good. Britten was on hand and was told by his publishers that opportunities were rife in New York for an operetta that could be performed by high schools.

If the course of true love now ran relatively smooth for the two expatriate collaborators, that of their first opera did not. Auden was to settle for its subject on Paul Bunyan, the mythological giant American logger. The idea may have started during what the poet called his "honeymoon" holiday with Kallman — spent partly "in a log cabin with the most wonderful view over towards the mountains of Colorado, our horizon is about 300 miles long. It's very pioneer and you would laugh to see me rising at 6am to chop wood and draw water . . ."

So the legend of Bunyan seemed a perfect "matter of America" theme. The leading Auden scholar Edward Mendelson notes that John Dryden (much admired by Auden) had written a *King Arthur* for Purcell, "the first and still the only libretto written by a major English poet for a major English composer". Auden would write *Paul Bunyan* for Britten, and it "would be second".

Britten created a score whose sheer range of expression (and instrumentation) put to good use almost every one of the diverse compositional tasks he had tackled with Auden in the 1930s. Blues, musical "numbers", filmic underscoring, grand operatic parody and shades of Kurt Weill and Alban Berg helped an entertaining "choral operetta" to carry Auden's weightier subtext of "How to live well in a country that the pioneers have made it possible to live in."



Lumberjack song: a scene from the Royal Opera's staging of *Paul Bunyan*, the opera conceived by Britten and Auden during their time in America

The eventual (and essentially amateur) premiere was at Columbia University in May 1941, and less than successful. "Auden's characters," comments Mendelson, "were American in the same way that the characters in *The Mikado* are Japanese, and American critics who were not bored were offended." But the work's first public already seemed to enjoy the hybrid form — more a play with extended musical numbers than pure operetta — that worried the "experts" because they could not precisely tag it. An increasing number of revivals since Britten (slightly) reworked the score in 1973 has confirmed that popular impression.

For the Britten-Auden relationship, however, *Bunyan* was the beginning of an end. On Peter Pears's prompting, composer and tenor left the Bohemian menage in Brooklyn where their flatmates (during the run-up to *Bunyan*'s premiere) had included Auden, the novelist Carson McCullers, the writer/composer Paul Bowles and the writer/stripper Gypsy Rose Lee. At first Pears and Britten went West to California, before returning to wartime England.

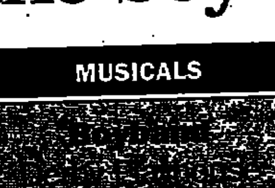
Just before they left America came Auden's most intrusive lecture yet, written for Pears's eyes as well: "If you are really to develop to your full stature, you will have, I think, to suffer, and make others suffer, in ways which are totally strange to you at present." The working relationship now trailed off in parallel with the personal one. Britten provided incidental music for Auden's joint reworking (with Bertolt Brecht) of *The Duchess of Malfi*. But only very small sections of their planned collaboration on a Christmas oratorio called *For The Time Being* were ever set. An Auden poem was used in the *Spring Symphony*. And that was to be it.

Pears said later that "Ben was on a different track now, and he was no longer prepared to be dominated — bullied — by Wystan". While Auden (and Kallman) went on to create opera libretti for Igor Stravinsky and Hans Werner Henze, Britten was never to collaborate again with a major living poet in his operas and song settings.

● Paul Bunyan *opens at Sadler's Wells (0171-863 8000) tomorrow with a reduced price preview. Mendelson's* Later Auden *is published by Faber and Faber in May*

Jobs for the boys

MUSICALS



Never have the pop charts been so full of boy bands and never has the West End been host to so many rock musicals. Put the two together and you have a formula which surely cannot fail. That, at least, is the thinking behind *Boyband*, not a rock musical but a "pop drama", which comes to the London stage in June.

While *Buddy* and *Grease* wallow in Fifties nostalgia and *Saturday Night Fever* and *Mamma Mia!* revisit the Seventies, Peter Quilter's play is an entirely contemporary take on the pop world. The problem is that the show is all pop and little drama. A successful musical stands or falls on the quality of its songs but at the same time it requires some semblance of a plot. The producers are aware of this, and insist that by the time it gets to the West End it will be a different and better show.

Modelled on groups such as Take That and Boyzone, Quilter's fictitious band Freedom are five young men and they all sing and dance impressively, particularly Damien Flood's lead singer, Sean, and Daniel Crossley as the songwriter Danny. Many of the songs, too, are convincing, created under the supervision of music consultant Tina Mathews and several of them, such as *All This And Heaven Too*, could easily hold their own on the Radio 1 playlist.

The plot, such as it is, involves a manipulative manager played by Bryan Murphy and the band's attempt to wrest back control of their career. Yet the characterisation is thin and the manager's lines clichéd. The power struggle within the band between Sean and Danny, loosely based on the falling out between Take That's Gary Barlow and Robbie Williams, is better drawn yet other interesting sub-plots are undeveloped. We have Matt, the gay one, played engagingly by Tom Ashton, the one who already has a child and the one with a drug problem. All three have to keep their circumstances secret but the dramatic potential of the conflict between public and private lives is merely sketched out rather than coloured in.

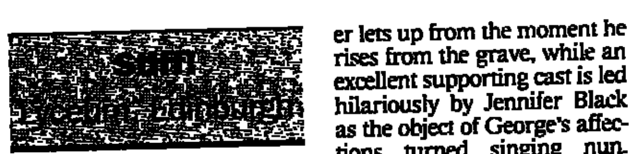


The next famous five? Freedom, *Boyband*'s fictitious group

The set is minimal but clever use is made of a video screen to show fictitious interviews and MTV coverage and the choreography, under the direction of Billie's dancemeister Phil Griffin, is powerful. If they can tweak the plot and flesh out the characters a little more, *Boyband* will be irresistible. And if they release *All This And Heaven Too* as a single, life will surely imitate art and Freedom will have a huge chart hit on their hands.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

Devilish silly



There's an awful lot riding on this brand new musical penned by the Scottish actor Forbes Masson, famed thus far as part of a comic team with Alan Cumming. One minute it's a trashy studio-sized affair intended for Glasgow's Tron Theatre, the next director Caroline Hall's Diva Productions have a load of lottery money thrown at them and this self-styled comedy of sex, death and silly songs is touring every major stage in Scotland.

This is essentially Faust revisited for laughs. Nothing new there: Peter Cook and Dudley Moore did it years ago with *Bedazzled*. But there's something about this everyday tale of impotent small-town jobsworth George, who wakes up one day wanting more, that taps into the topsy-turvy psyche of the male, premillennial thirtysomething in a wholly heartfelt manner.

Getting *Stiff!* onstage has clearly been a labour of love for Masson, who somewhat tellingly takes the lead role in this rumbustious and kitsch affair modelled on camp cult shows of the past 30 years. When Tom McGovern's flamboyant Devil (called Neville) offers George an easy route through the back door to fame, fortune and fornication, it both expresses and debunks the hollow allure of a pseudo-glamorous world where art and commerce are shrewdly unfaithful bedfellows; a bit, some would argue, like the theatre world which Masson himself inhabits.

But let's not read too much into things. For when it works best, *Stiff!* is a glorious piece of musical fluff that delights in its own silliness. Masson never lets up from the moment he rises from the grave, while an excellent supporting cast is led hilariously by Jennifer Black as the object of George's affections turned singing nun. Cherubs in drag guard the pearly gates while Gordon Dougall's rousing if somewhat unmemorable tunes are performed live by a cast obviously savouring every double entendre.

Where *Stiff!* really falls down is in its pre-election insistance on addressing "the Scottish question". One-dimensional parochialisms and clichéd political comment will succeed only in shortening both *Stiff!*'s lifespan and its travelling power. Director Caroline Hall, however, is to be praised for somehow keeping order. And, with some brutal editing and a three-week run to get things up to speed, Masson should not only have the first big theatrical hit of the new Scottish Parliament on his hands, but will have proved once and for all that it's not just the devils of London's West End who have all the best tunes.

NEIL COOPER

CLASSICAL CDS: Rare Hungarians; legendary Puccinians; Mendelssohn with a difference

INSTRUMENTAL

■ LISZT/LAJTHA
Piano Trios
Takacs Piano Trio
Hungaroton HCD 31815
★★★ *£15.99*

THE Takacs Trio, formed by the ex-leader of the Takacs Quartet, give next Monday's Radio 3 lunchtime concert at the Wigmore Hall, and they have just released an enterprising and irresistible disc which shows off well the tangy character of their musicianship.

They pay homage to their great musical compatriot Ferenc Liszt in three rarely-heard and delicious transcriptions for piano trio; and they introduce us to his successor, a contemporary of Bartók and Kodály, whose qualities are only just beginning to be made known: Laszlo Lajtha. Lajtha, like Liszt, spent valuable musical time in Paris: and the spectre of Rameau can be discerned through dense clouds of paprika in the fiery Trio Concertant, while the 1930 Sonatine for violin and piano pays oblique homage to Bach.

The sparky enthusiasm of the Takacs Trio certainly whets the appetite to hear more of Lajtha. More, too, over and over again, of Liszt's mischievous makeover of his own Hungarian Rhapsodies in which the Takacs Trio sound like an oversize one-man gypsy band, and of this intriguing and virtuoso metamorphosis of *Tristia* from *La vallée d'Obermann*.

HILARY FINCH

OPERA

■ CENTURY'S GREATEST SINGERS IN PUCCINI
Romophone 86001-2 (distributed by Harmonia Mundi)
★★

ROMOPHONE'S arm stretches way back to the first decades of the century for this collection of Puccini allstars. No one born after 1900 gets much of a look in. The finest tracks belong to Gigli, taken when he was in his mid-thirties and before some of the vocal mannerisms which marred his later years had arrived. The Cavaradossi arias from *Tosca* have the warmth and virility of the great tenor in his prime. Equally impressive is Des Grieux being bowled over at his first sight of Manon Lescaut. John McCormack's account of Rodolfo's Act I aria from *Bohème* is grace itself.

Staying with *Bohème*, Lucrezia Bori skips easily betweeen Musetta and Mimi, while Dame Nellie Melba tries a bit too hard to be skittish in the latter role. Claudia Muzio, a dramatic soprano if ever there was one, is shown at her best in *Tosca* and *Suor Angelica*. They were not afraid of Puccini's emotional outbursts in the 1920s, as Sheridan and Pertile prove in the final duet from *Manon Lescaut*.

There are no dud tracks, but a dud accompanying booklet. No texts, and no contexts for chosen extracts. Worse still, there are no singer biographies: only connoisseurs and greybeards are likely to know who Margaret Sheridan and Edith Mason were. So lose a star for shoddy work.

JOHN HIGGINS

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

ORCHESTRAL

■ MENDELSSOHN
Italian and Reformation Symphonies
Vienna PO/Gardiner
DG 459 156-2
★★★ *£15.99*

THE stereotypical image of Mendelssohn is that of a prodigiously fluent composer, whose speed and facility of writing inevitably raise suspicions of lack of depth. In fact, he was one of the most scrupulous, perfectionist composers of all time, and plagued by self-doubt. Even the *Italian Symphony*, whose sunny Mediterranean geniality radiates such confidence, was subjected to extensive alteration.

Curiously, this latter, 1834 version (the year following the premiere) has been neither published nor recorded until now, even though it deserves to be regarded as the composer's final thoughts on the subject. An edition by John Michael Cooper is about to be published in Wiesbaden, while John Eliot Gardiner offers both original and revised versions in this new account with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

The alterations, which affect all movements except the first, range from details of melody and scoring to (in the Saltarello) substantial structural modifications. The performances of both versions, as well as of the *Reformation Symphony*, are everything one would expect from this collaboration: perceptive, dynamic and immaculately executed.

BARRY MILLINGTON

★ *Worth hearing*
★★ *Worth considering*
★★★ *Worth buying*

BOOKS

Inside the mind's cage

The victim relives a kidnapping for years afterwards, says **Brian Keenan**

IN THE CELLAR
By Jan Philipp Reemtsma
Secker & Warburg, £14.99
ISBN 0 436 20469 X



I admit to having had some difficulties with this book: it took me some time to home in on what the author was pursuing. I became increasingly aware as I read that perhaps Jan Philipp Reemtsma was taking himself hostage again while washing his hands of the trauma of his captivity. Within the first dozen pages he writes: "There is no copyright on your own life, but it's easier to come to terms with every kind of misappropriation if there is a standing text somewhere you can point to."

Jan Philipp Reemtsma, a businessman and intellectual, was abducted outside his house in Hamburg in 1996. Held for ransom, he was chained by his ankles in a small cellar for 33 days. This book, translated by Carol Brown Janeway, is his account of his imprisonment, and as such seemed to me at times a troubled "standing text" on what he might describe as the paradox between intimacy and ennui, those conflicting emotions are the constant reality of the enclosed world of the hostage. This is not an easy subject to write about, as I know from experience: Reemstma employs a very stylised construct that, for me anyway, obscured the organic development of the work.

Three voices sit in an uneasy harmony: the writer/author, Reemtsma as hostage and an ambiguous "he", Reemtsma from a third party perspective. The elaboration of these personae helps him, as he says, "to incorporate [his experience] into one's own biography, to make it accessible to words". I accept this, but think that it is done in preparation to the written word.

Jan Philipp Reemtsma is the founder/director of the Hamburg Institute for social research. His book is very well informed with Freudian and philosophical analysis of his experience and feelings, which I found intriguing. But sometimes I found that the urgent and informed logic the author applies had the tendency to lead to word games and semantic confusion.

I can sympathise with this. The most difficult problem I, like Reemtsma, had to confront in writing about such an experience was this dilemma: how does one write about a time when nothing happened, but everything happened, or what the author calls, a "falling out of the world"?

Maybe because I felt close to Reemtsma and was unconsciously urging him through his existential confrontation that I felt the book took too long to "open up" the cellar. Also, Reemtsma tells us that he and his wife had considered writing a joint book from the separate diaries they kept during his captivity. The project never came about, but I felt that some of this concept was subsumed unsuccessfully into the first half of the book.

However, the last third of the book is where the real conflict begins and where the light begins to filter into the writer's cellar. The rigour of his emotionally scarred intellect demands much of the reader and reveals much about the act of writing. He states: "Writing marked a place outside feeling and in writing he controlled this place".

A few pages later he declares: "English allows you to be succinct, ironic, sarcastic and yet not so much cynical as German." Perhaps it is the cynical distance that holds the author back from "falling out of the world" once more and into his captivity where words and language are no more than the gibberish of Babel.

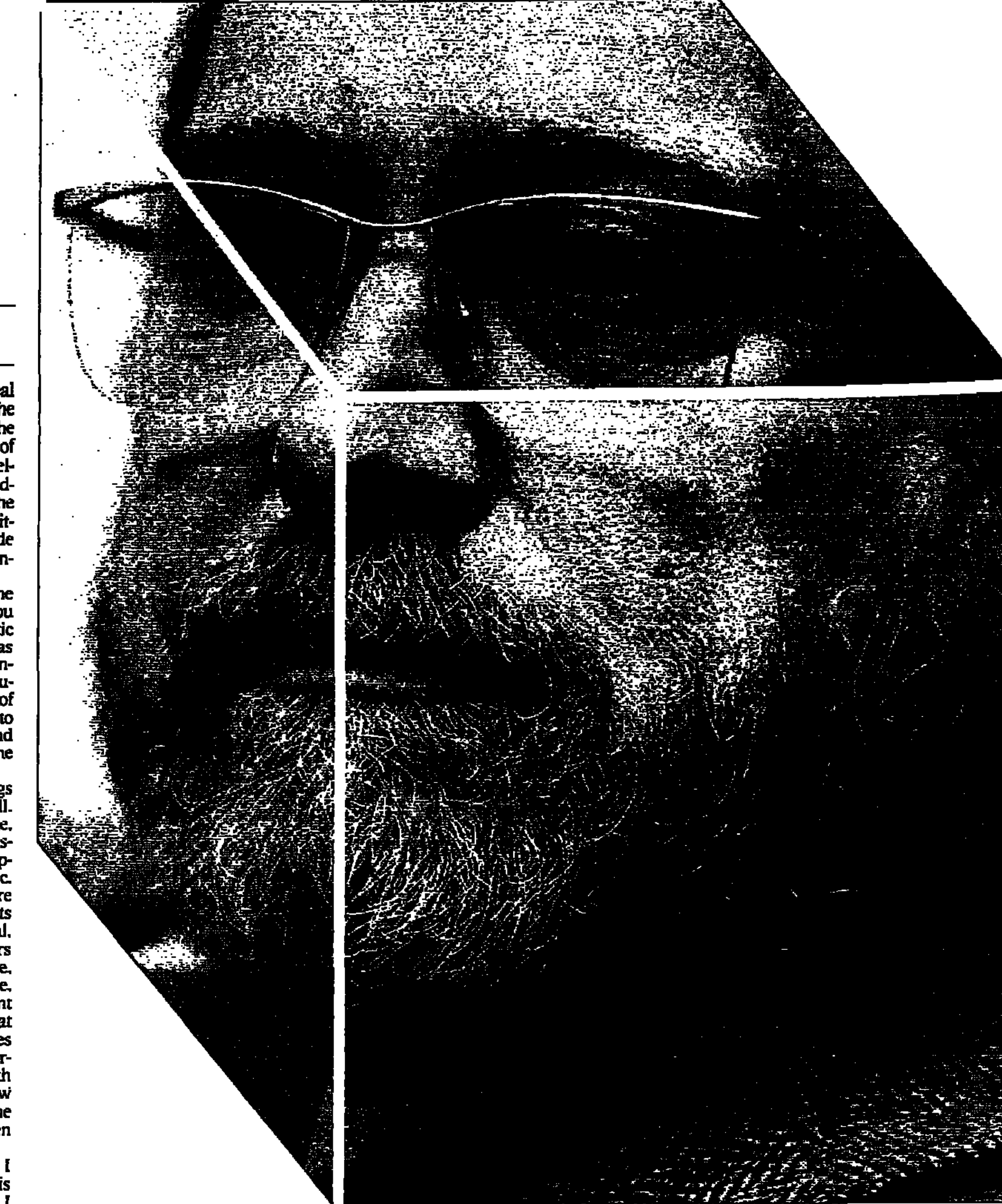
But he does explore feelings and states I know all too well. He analyses guilt, shame, fear, loneliness and helplessness, all with the clean perception of the intellectual cynic. He questions the central core of Western philosophy and its exposition of the individual, the self and the soul. He enters into debate with St Augustine, Descartes, Montaigne, Hume, Wittgenstein, Sartre and Kant in a fast-paced dialectic that resolves nothing but explores everything. I know this journey. I have travelled with some of these men and a few others — if not with the same erudition as Reemtsma, then with the same passion.

But whatever difficulty I had with the first half of this book and whatever closeness I felt in the last third, the concluding pages disturbed me. The freed hostage looks on life from a point of seemingly irreversible displacement. His world is absurd. His capacity to rejoice is irrevocably damaged. In such a world death is easy and desirable. Hate gnaws at him, but he states: "I gain no compensation from hatred. The time in the cellar destroyed this symmetry too."

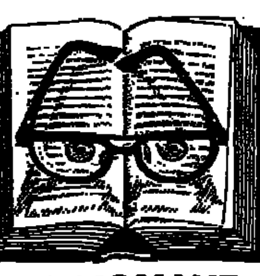
In the closing pages the author declares himself quintessentially dispossessed. He writes: "I think human Utopias are human fear in distorted form. The feelings I have been trying to describe here can be summed up in almost no other way. Everything is as it was, except that it and I no longer fit together . . . I can't get a hold on things anymore . . . world and self are no longer in harmony." The closing line of the book concludes eerily: "In the cellar feelings of no longer being part of the world had their place. In the world they have none. The only place I was at home with these feelings was in the cellar."

Reemtsma's book is a poignant testimony and a harrowing attempt to come to terms with himself. But I don't want to believe in the fatalism of his final words — even if at times I feel it breathing down my neck. Because I choose not to. My own captive experience taught me that choice is the crown of life and not to choose is to tumble blindly back into the cellar, with no reprieve.

MARTIN POPE



Apart from a broken nose, the damage done to Reemtsma was mental — his sense of no longer belonging to the world



BIBLIOMANE

A blast to the masses

■ EZRA POUND, most uncompromising of literary critics, wrote a series of substantial articles in 1917 about the British press and the tastes it played to. He was despairingly funny about the magazines of the masses, such as *Answers*. "The cover addresses me in these terms: 'It will be a red-letter day for you when you receive the corsets, because it will be the beginning of a new life. From the moment when you put them on a ceaseless stream of magnetism permeates the whole body from head to heel . . . You feel a different woman.' "

In his investigation of "English Kultur", Pound came up against *The Spectator*, and found it "an unfailing butt". Hearsay told him that it " 'dictated the conservative policy' whatever that phrase may mean". He quotes a few disjointed sentences, illustrating absence of thought. "The Government must act with a proper sense etc . . ."; "The PM made a v.g. speech o.t.w. at Queen's Hall last Sat., the 3d anniv. of G.B. entry i.t.c."

This may look like sloppiness. It isn't. Pound's "etc" points out the omnipresence and futility of sentences proclaiming that "The Government must", and the tautology of calling for "a proper sense of . . ." — because the writer is saying no more than that it is proper to have a proper sense. But the great critical stroke comes with his use of those initial letters, which point out how readily the reader can supply the missing words "on the war" and "into the conflict".

He goes on to quote "Our aeroplanes played a.g.p. i.t.v.", showing how words are deadened by their inevitability, just as they are today when a decision by Sinn Fein is said to be "a blow to the p.p.", or we are told of the Serbs "rounding up i.m.w. and c". War and diplomacy rely on verbal placebos — talk of "ground troops" as though there were another kind — but it is instructive to see how much writing can be abbreviated to Pound's "etc". "All one can pray for," he concluded, "is more honesty and less camouflage." His articles deserve to be reprinted.

■ *THE Yale Younger Poets series has been going for 80 years, and the YYP Anthology (£25/£10.50), edited and introduced by George Bradley, is chunky and uneven. It is a reminder of how little American poetry is known in Britain. The most established names are often strangers here.*

The latest Younger Poet is Craig Arnold, whose Shells *(£12.50/£7.50) is about masculinity, food and the difficulties of tenderness. There are good, rather weird stories here about obsessive behaviour. Sexual banter between friends is suddenly thrown down like a gauntlet; a craving for spicy food turns pathological. Arnold describes the hard, helmeted surface that men like to show, and how they fear humiliation. Like the collector of blades who thought his interest was "purely amateur", he cuts to the quick.*

■ **DEIGHTON, BELL in Cambridge recently catalogued a thousand books of 20th-century poetry from the library of the poet David Posner, greatly underpricing many rare copies. The books were sold almost immediately for what must have been tens of thousands of pounds less than their value — mostly to dealers, who took them to the San Francisco bookfair. Deighton, Bell itself, along with Heffers, has now been bought by Blackwells.**

JIM McCUE

Statesman present at the creation of the postwar world

Dean Acheson, the subject of James Chace's fine ***Acheson: The Secretary of State who Created the American World*** (Simon & Schuster, £25; ISBN 0 684 80843 9), is best remembered in this country for his 1962 aphorism at the West Point Military Academy in which he said: "Great Britain has lost an empire and not yet found a role." It touched a very sore spot only six years after Suez and on the threshold of de Gaulle's veto on our first and already belated attempt to join the Common Market — as it was then called.

But he should be still more remembered for his part in the Marshall Plan, in the putting together of Nato and in the rallying of the Western world from the post-1945 slough of despond which led on, after 40 years of long and often tense waiting, to the great bloodless victory of 1989. Acheson was not an unduly modest man, but when he called the second (1969) volume of his memoirs *Present at the Creation* it was by no means an unfounded bit of bombast.

As Secretary of State from 1949 to 1953 (having been Under-Secretary in 1945-47) Acheson was, with General George Marshall, one of the twin pillars of the Truman administration. Although he was the epitome of an East Coast foreign policy establishment "gent", Acheson had a profound admiration for the courageous decisiveness of his largely self-educated boss who had been catapulted into the presidency from a background of Missouri machine politics by the death of Roosevelt. They got on very well, depite the fact that Acheson, superficially at least, was exactly the sort of "stuffed shirt" whom Truman instinctively disliked.

Acheson's father was an episcopal clergyman who became Bishop of Connecticut. He himself had been at Groton (America's answer to Eton), at Yale and at the Harvard Law School. He then did two years as law clerk to the great Supreme Court Justice Brandeis before entering a Washington law firm with the splendidly Wasp name of Covington and Burling. From this secure base he made his several political excursions into high appointed (but never elected) Democratic office.

He was Roosevelt's Under Secretary of the Treasury in 1933, but lasted only eight months owing to a policy dispute. Then he had four and a half wartime years as one of the four Assistant Secretaries of the State Department, resigned in 1945 to go back to private life and practice, but was summoned back by Truman after a few weeks to be the sole Under Secretary in the Department. He had a more successful legal sabbatical from 1947 to 1949, and then reached his apotheosis when he replaced Marshall for the immensely testing last four years of Truman's term.

Truman with the Japanese surrender, 1945. Acheson (in profile) stands on the right

Acheson never really got on with his fellow Grotonian, Roosevelt. This was partly because he felt that the President patronised him, although this was a very difficult thing to do with the astringent and self-confident Acheson. Maybe it was because Acheson, in spite of his blue chip education, was in English terms the equivalent of a "poor" Etonian — a Douglas Hurd or a Robert Armstrong — and not a magnate in a Cecil or Rothschild sense, which, *mutatis mutandis*, both Roosevelt and his near contemporary Averell Harriman were.

This did not prevent Acheson from being himself capable of great put-downs. In the last year of his life I observed him doing a spectacular one against the Maine Senator Muskie, trying hard to get Acheson's support for his presidential bid. Muskie responded fuzzily to an Acheson foreign policy *tour d'horizon* by expressing agreement with his broad argument but adding the gloss that there was need for greater democratic participation in policy making. Acheson turned on him like a matador on a feeble bull: "Are you trying to say, Senator, that United States foreign policy should be determined in a series of little town meetings in the State of Maine? Don't ask them, Senator, tell them. When I believe you will do that, I will support you. Until then, not." It was devastating.

It was also one of the last cries of the 30-year-old history of authoritative American world leadership under the auspices of the Democratic party.

Professor Chace provides a wise and admirably paced account of all the central and fairly familiar events of Acheson's life. His difficulty is that Acheson's memoirs were both comprehensive and sparkling, and indeed I was struck by the fact that when a footnote was interesting enough to make me flick through to the reference appendix the source was nearly always given as *Present at the Creation*. However, he surmounts this and has produced an admirable, essentially political biography.

There is, thankfully, no attempt at psycho-sexual revelation, but there are occasional passages on lifestyle, done with perception, restraint and, as far as I can tell, accuracy. On British matters he tends to be slightly off-beam with the detail but — which is more important — very much on-beam with the major issues. He sees the contradiction in Britain's belief that it could improve its "special" relations with America by remaining detached from a European unity, to which US policy was dedicated, with a clarity which unfortunately eluded successive British Prime Ministers.

ROY JENKINS

Poems with good posture

POEMS
By J. H. Prynne
Bloodaxe, £25
ISBN 1 85224 491 4

A DEFINITIVE volume of J.H. Prynne's poetry may be greeted by a broader public with about as much excitement as a complete iguana breeder's manual. But for a small, but steadily growing, elect, its arrival is cause for celebration. His previous collection is out of print. And those who did invest in a copy in the 1980s, have probably rendered it broken-spined by now.

For Prynne is not a lyrical poet whose work seeps gently into the bloodstream. Austerely cerebral, his poems are informed by scrupulous cogitation. A Cambridge academic, he is unforgiving of intellectual slackness. Writing on anything from "the matter of thermal packing" to marzipan, he teases out impossibly abstruse reflections, opens new corridors for thought to stream down only to realise that the endpoint is vanishing fast, that perhaps it would have been better never to have branched off in the first place.

Prynne's poems are conundrums that demand two types of reading. They ask for coffee, a dictionary and the concentration of an upright posture. But they also need the dreamy meditations of semi-recumbency. The reader is likely to nod off mulling over enigmas. But waking, head half-pillowed on crumpled pages, he finds an untested stream of insights swimming through the mind: "a sweet cheat, newly torn", or the product of "a level ceremony of diffusion" perhaps.

For the new reader I would suggest that the first way into this complex collection lies in a simple appreciation of the pleasure of sound. "Star-naked your sherbet pinch does spin"; "the ear spins / with sharp cries, there / is shear at the flowline": "timelike delirium /cools at this crossing, with your head in my arms."

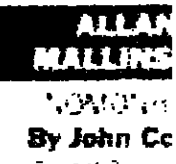
Every word is measured with scientific precision. If the ideas that these poems amass are to be understood, the etymologies and associations of a sharply distinctive vocabulary must be pondered. Prynne uses the concepts of finance and science as metaphors for broader philosophical meanings. Their specialist systems become the touchstones by which the essence of love, desire, linguistic purity, man's relationship to nature or to the eternal, can be tested.

The associations will never be straightforward. This poet's skill is to trace the diffuse ways in which the unedited mind assembles its ideas. Although his poems are not narrative in themselves, they require reading in a meticulously narrative manner.

But before this they require trust. "The whole thing it is, the difficult / matter: to shrink the confines / down", Prynne writes in his opening poem. Holistic theories are not on offer, nor is there any simple reductionist key to each poem.

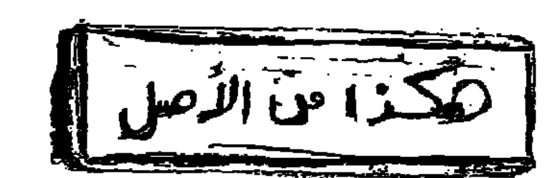
Yet simple engagement in passages of pure lyricism, backed up by the tautness of lateral coherences, should convince the reader that they are in honourable hands. Prynne may be difficult and unfamiliar. But this is because he is a poet who questions the possibilities of his chosen form with as much art and rigour as T.S. Eliot ever did.

RACHEL CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON





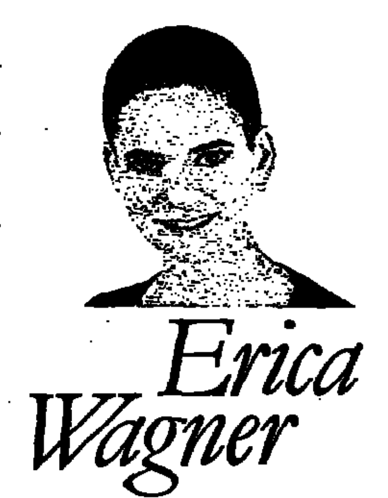




BOOKS

The wild border between fable and fiction

Andrew Greig's novel, *When They Lay Bare*, draws the reader into a powerful tale of love and vengeance



Erica Wagner

Authors are not known for piping up on the subject of sin, but there's one evil most all of them will comfortably agree upon: plagiarism. The lines are clearly drawn: this is *mine, that is yours, keep out.*

At a second glance, however, it's *not quite as easy as all that.* School teachers constantly come up *against the problem of admitting* that, er, well, no, Shakespeare *didn't make up those stories*, he nicked them from someone else. A *few years ago an Australian* scholar levelled an accusation of plagiarism at Graham Swift, claiming that his Booker Prize-winning novel *Last Orders* had a structure and story uncomfortably close to William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*; however, months earlier, *The Times*'s reviewer, Claire Messud, noted not plagiarism but an homage to the late American writer.

In the face of this confusion, it is worth reminding ourselves that there are some stories which seem to spring — eternally, and eternally renewed — from a kind of storybank kept safe through generations *of human minds. This* is not quite the same as making the argument, *as some do, that there are only* seven stories in all the world; just *that there are narratives that have* drawn and will draw people from *all cultures in all times. Stories* of love and betrayal; of familial antagonisms; of *supernatural doings*. It was recently pointed out to me that *the presumably modern* obsession with *X-Files* alien abductions is no more than an updating of the old legends, with their fairy kings and queens whisking hapless mortals away with them.

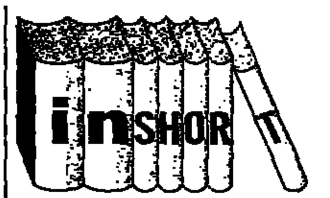
And so to Andrew Greig, whose debut novel, *When They Lay Bare*, is a skilful riff on an ancient ballad. *The Twa Corbies* is a border ballad, its origins in the "debatable lands" between Scotland and England where, in the 15th and 16th centuries, only a natural law of honour and retribution existed between families and clans. An unidentified narrator overhears two ravens, or corbies, planning the feast they will make on the body of a slain knight whose lady — for unknown reasons — has taken another lover. It is a spare and haunting tale: never mentioned are the actual causes of the knight's death, or the source of the enmity that lay behind his killing. It is through this ancient skeleton's whitening ribs that Greig, in the best and oldest tradition of storyspinning, has threaded his tale.

Greig brings clannish rivalry into the modern day. David Elliot is set to inherit the estate of his father, Sir Simon Elliot; or what's left of it. Half was lost when Sir Simon and David's mother divorced, in large part due to an affair the elder Elliot had with a woman who was a Lauder: the two families at odds for generations. Jinny Lauder died in mysterious circumstances; now her daughter — perhaps Simon's child but perhaps not — arrives, apparently from nowhere, on the estate bearing her mother's only treasure: a collection of plates that tell in faded shards the story of *The Twa Corbies*. During the course of the novel one of the plates is explosively smashed: it would be fair to say that the arrival of Marnie Lauder has a similar effect on the Elliots.

When They Lay Bare respects and transforms the tradition it springs from. It is now a commonplace to say that the most exciting new writers in Britain come from north of the border — from Alasdair Gray to Irvine Welsh to Alison Kennedy to Alex Benzie — if further proof were needed, Greig provides it. He is adventurous and precise with his language, moving with ease between standard English and dialect Scots. A skill like this might, however, be seen as little more than a sleight of hand performed with vowels and consonants; what goes deeper is the author's ability to delineate the landscape of emotion — and the emotion in the landscape — with enviable grace. He is particularly good at the latter, raising before the reader's eyes the bleakly savage landscape that still exists — remarkably — only a few hundred miles from the mild and sleepy south: a place of trees twisted by wind, of sharp-eyed hawks, of treacherous burns. As to the former, it would be hard to say that his writing is clear where the feelings of his characters are concerned: better that he is adept at conveying their confusion. Modern men and women, they are trapped in a story that is more their inheritance that any acre or heirloom. Few writers, these days, have the courage to grapple with Fate: Greig meets it head on.

The old ballads draw in the listener with their sparseness and their story. *When They Lay Bare* does the same, for this is a thriller and no mistaking it, though one as black and deep as a border tarn. Marnie Lauder unsettles the already uneasy lives of the Elliots and those around them; in this haunted story it is hardly surprising to find Sim Elliot's factor, Tat, with a gift for carving goblin netsuke, the ruby eyes of his tiny beasts gazing out with the silent wisdom of blood. Who Marnie really is, her mother's real fate: that is for the reader to discover, as Greig's tale sings through this book. "O'er his white banes when they are bare/ The winds shall blow for evermair/ The winds shall blow for evermair . . ."

WHEN THEY LAY BARE
By Andrew Greig
Faber, £16.99
ISBN 0 571 19687 X



On the run from love

SISTER
By A. Manette Ansay
Allison & Busby Ltd, £7.99
ISBN 0 749 00 403 7

SAM is a fallen angel in a fiercely Catholic family. Brought up by the scruff of his neck, his father practised the kind of rough love that gives a sore heart and a sore head. A. Manette Ansay begins her tale from the Midwest with the news of Sam's disappearance. She pieces together his life through the eyes of his sibling Abigail. *Sister* wooed the critics when it came out in America earlier this year. With her *insight into the anatomy of* persecution, she can only *repeat the exercise over here.*

In the dock

CORNER KINGDOM
By John Campbell
Lagan Press, £5.99
ISBN 1 87368765 6

THE debut novel by John Campbell, a Belfast poet, takes us to the dockyard where he worked from school leaving age until 1985. Descriptions of working class Belfast in the Fifties includes the detail to be expected of a man who has *spent over 30 years on the job.* Campbell shadows a young boy *from* his first day at work. But what could be a sicklysweet mouthful of nostalgia — where flat-capped workers sweat blood, read *The Mirror* and drink warm ale — has a ferocious aftertaste.

Easy does it

DOÑA PERFECTA
By Benito Pérez Galdós
Phoenix House, £16.99
ISBN 1 861591 31

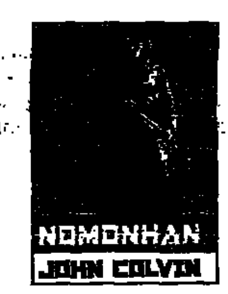
THIS fresh translation, by A. R. Tulloch, of a book by the *19th-century writer Benito Pérez* Galdós explores the effect the social changes of 19th-century Spain had on the country's religious orthodoxy. Pepe Ray leaves Madrid for the rural nowheresville of Orbajosa where he means to claim an inheritance. But his aunt, Doña Perfecta, treads on her nephew's plans. Although Pérez Galdós is astute in his portrayal of relatives who can't quite relate, *Doña Perfecta* never quite recovers from its drowsy beginning.

ALEX O'CONNELL

Savage battle of a secret war

ALLAN MALLINSON

NOMONHAN
By John Colvin
Quartet Books, £18
ISBN 0 7043 7112 X



I remember very clearly sitting in the Malay jungle as a newly commissioned officer nearly 30 years ago, reading with mounting dismay Noel Barber's *Sinister Twilight* (still the best book on the fall of Singapore), wondering how on earth the Japanese seemed to arrive so unexpectedly — and what, indeed, I was doing there 30 years on. John Colvin's *Nomonhan* — a battle I had never heard of then — explains all.

By 1905, at the end of the Russo-Japanese War, Japan had gone from the closed society of the Shogunate to an Imperial power with a growing appetite for foreign raw materials — and in fewer than 40 years. Manchuria continued to be a cause of friction, however, and during the late 1920s and 1930s some in the Japanese general staff became *convinced that* war with Soviet Russia and her satellite state Outer Mongolia was necessary. This, the so-called "Strike North" policy, was opposed by the Japanese navy, principally, and those in the general staff who favoured expansion south into Indo-China. The (Japanese) Kwantung army, occupying Manchuria, acted increasingly independently of Tokyo and drove "Strike North" strongly.

In 1939 the disputed Khalkin Gol, a 60 mile buffer along the Halha river, demarcating the border between Mongolia and Manchuria, became the scene of fierce fighting between the technologically superior Soviet army (under Zhukov) and the fanatically brave Japanese.

It is not just the casualty figures at Nomonhan, as the principal battle is usually called, that chill (anything from 25,000 to 50,000 Japanese dead); *it is the nature of the* fighting — desperate, confused, visceral: "Yamagata's Group 2 horribly ambushed 150 Soviet Buriat Mongols singing military ditties on the march, and slaughtered 80 of them at point-blank range over open sights, taking two prisoners." All fighting is desperate, confused and visceral, but at Nomanhan it was "personal" too — the race factor.

John Colvin is exceptionally well qualified to write of the battle, its origins and consequences — the only book in English to consider all three fully. He was born in Tokyo, served in the Royal Navy during the Second World War and then joined the diplomatic service, becoming High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, Consul General in Hanoi and Ambassador to Mongolia. He writes economically, his style a *mixture of Foreign Office* telegrams and naval signal. The reader must pay attention. But the pearls are there: "In the propaganda section of the HQ, the poet Konstantin Simonov found the earth floor littered with photographs taken from Japanese corpses . . . Mount Fuji, snaps of parents, wives, children, cherry blossom, all that heartbreak in the huge, military machine with its grand, pitiless movement of events, trampled by the feet of white strangers."

After Nomonhan the Japanese had no expansion alternative but to strike south (and Pearl Harbor), and Colvin speculates convincingly on the consequences for the war in Europe had Nomonhan been a victory for them — the only comforting bit of an otherwise gruesome story.

Allan Mallinson is a serving Army colonel. His novel, A Close Run Thing, *is published by Bantam, £15.99.*


A Mongolian pilot and a Russian officer before the battle of Nomonhan, 1939. Picture: the Mongolian Embassy

Ferocious flower fetish

AMANDA CRAIG

TULIP FEVER
By Deborah Moggach
Heinemann, £14.99
ISBN 0 434 00779 X



Tulipmania has been *much in evidence this* year. Perhaps as we *recoil from the greed of the* previous decade, the idea of how another nation once attracted disaster by its speculation on the tulip bulb offers the consolations of history. In the case of Deborah Moggach's *Tulip Fever* it also inspires a sumptuous and enthralling novel about art, love, illusion and money.

Sophia is the young and beautiful wife of an Amsterdam merchant, Cornelis. A collector of beautiful things in a city famed for its wealth and propriety, Cornelis adores her. Sophia, however, is cold and childless; her closest relation*ship is with her maid*, Maria. Unlike her mistress, Maria is all too well acquainted with the lineaments of love, enjoy*ing the embraces of the local* fishmonger, Willem. Then the adoring Cornelis hires a painter, Jan van Loos, to immortalise his marriage on canvas.

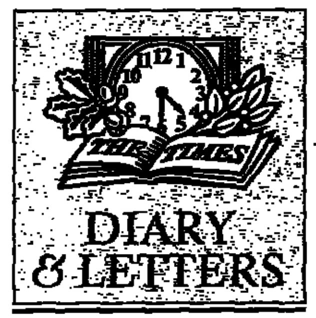
Inevitably, Jan and Sophia fall in love; but it is Maria, not Sophia, who becomes pregnant. Pretending to be with child herself, the mistress can keep her maid — and reject her husband, whose embraces make her feel "like an upturned beetle pressed down by a shoe". Soon, another plot begins to form, born of desperation and opportunism. Vast fortunes can be made by speculating on a single tulip bulb — and it is money, as well as cunning, which will set Sophia and Jan free.

Moggach writes marvellously about the world of the senses. Sex, food, cloth and Amsterdam in the 1630s are *all described with a passionate* precision, a delight in the sensual that is *reminiscent of* Michèle Roberts. Her small cast of characters are thoroughly known and their contortions in the cage of materialism are evoked with compassion, wit and humour. The shimmering, watery nature of Holland itself is linked so skilfully to every metaphor in the novel that its moral intelligence could easily be overlooked. At its heart, *Tulip Fever is about the world of the* spirit and its conflict with the world of the flesh. As each character executes his or her move in the intricate tragicomedy that develops, it is this spiritual dimension which deepens the novel and provides the denouement of a classic.

Where the novel is less satisfactory is in the author's mistrust of the reader's intelligence. Moggach has not, so far, been given her due as a novelist — perhaps because of her unfashionable fidelity to narrative — and it could be this which produces a sense of strain, of trying to be at once literary and middlebrow. She is good enough to let her work speak for itself, but again and again the skeleton of research grins through. As a reader, *you thoroughly resent this.* We come to believe in Jan's existence — until his dates are given. We believe in his paintings, until we find, interleaved in the novel, 16 colour reproductions of famous Dutch Old Masters. It's babyish enough to have illustrations, but these actually weaken the text. The fact that they are, in themselves, masterpieces does nothing for the imaginary world the author has conjured up out of words.

Anyone who loves painting (and indeed, anyone who loves gardening) will relish this book, which is the best of its kind since Barry Unsworth's *Stone Virgin*. But for Deborah Moggach to achieve the heights one senses she is capable of, she needs — like her own painter — to think less about the vices exemplified by tulip fever.


Passion blossoming from a bloom. Picture: Bridgeman



■ **GARRISON KEILLOR has a new book coming from Faber. *It is the* "biography" of Jimmy "Big Boy" Valente, a professional wrestler who became Governor of Minnesota. Anything to do with Jesse Ventura, the ex-wrestler who is, in fact, Governor of Minnesota? One wonders what the burly Ventura will think. Keillor claims it's a "genial novel, not mean at all" — but he's also called the Governor "this great big honking bullet-headed shovel-faced mutha who talks in a steroid growl and doesn't stop." There's a headlock for you.**

■ *THE Royal Society of Literature was hoping to launch a new annual of good writing by its Fellows, edited by John Gross and Hilary Mantel, but the society has given up. In its current bulletin, the chairman Michael Holroyd thanks Gross for "having tested the idea to its destruction". The trouble is that the Fellows are nearly all professional writers, and were reluctant to write for less than their usual fees.*

■ THE *TLS* reports that Michael Pastore found that *his child-care book, Dynamite Counsellors Don't Explode!*, was at number 1,106,125 on the Amazon.com bestseller lists. Soon afterwards, he heard he had gone up by 400,000 places — by selling 12 more copies.

■ **books@the-times.co.uk**

Brideshead and beyond

Hannah Betts debunks the myth of Oxbridge as a home for the privileged

Once it was a question of how to convince Oxbridge colleges that they wanted you as a student. Increasingly, however, Oxford and Cambridge have had to go on the offensive to convince students that they might want to choose one of these two universities.

So the question "What are the ancient universities looking for?" has evolved to include "And what do they offer that students might be seeking?" And there is the added complication of how best to choose *your college if it seems* as if both parties can do business.

First then, what are Oxford and Cambridge after? It helps to look good on paper, of course, but perfection is not a prerequisite. Established excellence in one area may be preferred against consummate achievement across the board, and this is where the school reference plays a crucial part. If a student does not have a string of starred As at GCSE, but is a genius in his or her chosen field, then their school has an obligation to say so.

Much is read into that "extra certain something" expected of Oxbridge candidates. All this really means is an appetite to learn, an ability to be taught and a capacity to think beyond the bounds of A level towards some larger academic picture.

In this context it is essential that candidates use the interview to demonstrate that they are capable of handling the demands of the tutorial system. Like a tutorial, the interview is less about getting answers right or wrong than it is about keeping the intellectual ball rolling and giving the impression that you would enjoy keeping it rolling for a further three years.

Of course the interview procedure cuts both ways. If dons play the encounter as an exercise in sadomasochism, then students are entitled to have second thoughts about whether or not they might be happier elsewhere.

This leads us to our second point of inquiry: what do Cambridge and Oxford deliver?

The transformation of the student population from the grateful beneficiaries of higher education into canny consumers means that the many advantages of the Oxbridge system are now weighed against a variety of other considerations — from the limited vocational content of most courses to the abject lack of nightlife in either city. Many view Oxbridge merely as a social anachronism that they can live without.

After years of access schemes and target-schools activity, the ancient universities are somewhat surprised to find that they continue to be seen as some sort of *Brideshead Revisited* throwback.

And indeed, if social anxieties are the only thing holding a student back from applying, he or she should certainly think again; the only anachronism at work here is the myth of anachronism itself.

Nor is it impossible to get in, whatever the universities' reputation for being ultra-selective. The average is three applicants per place, while at Bristol, Sheffield or Manchester universities it is more likely to be ten.

What Oxbridge offers can be summarised in simple material terms. It has world-class libraries; excellence in academic teaching; a tutorial system that can be tailored to meet individual needs and interests; an atmosphere in which scholarship is valued at all levels; and a respect for personal intellectual development sometimes missing at larger institutions.

The amount of money circulating through these two universities actually works to the advantage, rather than to the detriment, of poorer students — hardship, book and travel grants augment the traditional stipend offered by the college scholarship. Even the lack of after-hours entertainment is in some way compensated for by the vast number of celebrities willing to pass through the universities' hallowed corridors.

The Great Court of Trinity College, Cambridge

At a more worldly level, some graduates speak highly of the network of contacts that they have built up by the time they leave college. Moreover, it is certainly still the case that some employers feel that Oxbridge is something special and happily turn to the ancient universities for their graduate intake.

If this sounds appealing, the only remaining decision is which college — a choice typically dictated by a combination of knowing someone who went there, knee-jerk prejudice and the random superstitions of a student's sixth-form adviser. The college identities are considerably more homogenised than they were 20 years ago when issues such as the decline of public school dominance, the admission of women to "men's colleges" and greater student activism could create odd pockets of communal behaviour.

Both Oxford and Cambridge publish formal (university) and informal (student) admissions guides that help to simplify the process. In this case at least, size is important and students need to weigh up whether they can handle the potential claustrophobia of a community of 350 or the prospect of a less cohesive peer group of twice that size.

Applicants could do a lot worse than to read some of the work written by the individual who will teach them. This is, after all, the person who will be in charge of their education for the next three years — what better insight into the way in which their mind works?

Take the opportunity to visit, but bear in mind that the open days tend to be during the vacation and colleges always feel rather odd with nobody in them.

Be prepared to think laterally — a college's reputation for good food may seem like an irrelevance, but it produces a real community focus, and with a minimum of three years ahead, it may ultimately become rather more important. Similarly, a college's wealth may seem only a minor consideration, but it may have a big impact on living costs, rent rises and subsequent scholarships.

Prince William is said to be considering his choice at Oxbridge, with Lincoln College, Oxford, the current seat of Eric Anderson, the Prince of Wales's friend and former teacher, rumoured to be a strong favourite. This may present a final consideration for Prince William's many young admirers.

CHRIS HONEYWELL



Graduating from Oxford: like Cambridge, a great place for forming networks

[illegible]

The 1999 edition of the original league table: will Cambridge still be top? Plus, which are the popular subjects, and do they lead to jobs?

CLIVE POSTLETHWAITE



One of Magdalen college's two new Gothic-style student accommodation blocks

Dealing with the highs and lows

How to get value from reading the Norrington and Tompkins tables

Cambridge and Oxford have a love-hate relationship with the tables that establish their academic rankings, *Hannah Betts writes.*

On the one hand, the attribution of points for graduates' degree results is dismissed as only a crude index of academic success. At the same time, whenever the latest rankings are published, High Table gossip is about little else.

Certainly there is an argument for viewing these tables with some cynicism. They are compiled on the basis that a first is worth five points, a 2:1 four, a 2:2 three and a third-class degree one point. This means that poorer performance by a relatively small number of undergraduates can have a dramatic effect on a particular year's figures.

If applicants allow the tables to influence their choice of college, they should take into account more than one year's results.

The latest Norrington Table of Oxford colleges should be viewed in this light. While some colleges achieve a fairly stable performance, others show a degree of flux. Balliol is back on form after plummeting to 19th place last year, from its previous position of second. Christ Church similarly restores its fortunes.

Worcester has risen impressively from near the bottom of the list to make the top ten. St Peter's, one of the poorer colleges, improves its ranking, albeit less dramatically, to make the top 20.

Others fare less well. Corpus Christi plummets from seventh to twenty-fourth place and Trinity drops from eighth to twenty-fifth.

Cambridge's Tompkins Table, compiled by Peter Tompkins of Price Waterhouse, reveals far less erratic results. Trinity, Queens' and Christ's retain their position as the top three colleges, with merely a slight reshuffling. In the main, performance is similarly static.

Sidney Sussex's performance is the only surprise, dropping from fourth to seventeenth place. Founded in 1596, Sidney Sussex is the newest of the older colleges, but lacks the wealth of many of its peers.

This leads to the final caveat about the league tables. Older, richer colleges tend to do well, while newer, poorer ones typically fare badly — with women's colleges traditionally low down in, if not bottom of, the pile.

New Hall — one of Cambridge's two women's colleges — languishes at the bottom of its list for the second year running, while Newnham — the other — comes in at twentieth place.

St Anne's, Oxford's one remaining women's college, is in twenty-second place. Somerville went co-educational in 1994 in a move interpreted by many as an attempt to improve its academic results. However, it continues to perform badly at twenty-ninth.

[illegible]
1 (4) Jesus 84.0
2 (1) Merton 83.8
3 (5) Wadham 83.5
4 (2) St John's 83.3
5 (19) Balliol 82.6
6 (3) University 82.1
7 (13) Queen's 82.0
8 (12) St Ed Hall 81.2
9 (6) Keble 80.7
10 (27) Worcester 80.6
11 (11) Magdalen 80.2
12 (20) Christ Ch 80.2
13 (14) L M Hall 79.3
14 (9) New College 79.3
15 (24) Mansfield 79.2
16 (10) Oriel 79.1
17 (16) Lincoln 79.1
18 (15) Exeter 78.9
19 (18) Brasenose 78.9
20 (29) St Peter's 78.1
21 (23) Pembroke 78.1
22 (21) St Anne's 77.8
23 (17) Hertford 77.2
24 (7) Corpus C 77.1
25 (8) Trinity 76.9
26 (24) St Hilda's 76.9
27 (22) St Hugh's 76.4
28 (26) St Cat's 75.2
29 (25) Somerville 73.3
30 (30) Harris Man 70.5

[illegible]
1 (1) Trinity 66.35
2 (3) Queens' 64.52
3 (2) Christ's 64.50
4 (8) Caius 64.12
5 (7) Emmanuel 63.73
6 (11) Clare 63.22
7 (6) Trinity Hall 62.64
8 (10) St John's 62.54
9 (5) Pembroke 62.49
10 (14) King's 61.61
11 (12) Downing 61.22
12 (13) Fitzwilliam 60.83
13 (15) Churchill 60.26
14 (9) St Cath's 59.73
15 (16) Selwyn 59.64
16 (20) Jesus 59.61
17 (4) S Sussex 58.60
18 (23) Corpus C 58.22
19 (21) Robinson 58.01
20 (18) Newnham 57.93
21 (22) Girton 57.35
22 (17) Magdalene 57.17
23 (19) Peterhouse 57.14
24 (24) New Hall 55.6

Guidelines are available to students looking for off-campus accommodation, says **Lucien Watkins**

When finding digs becomes a nightmare

When a student is leaving home for the first time, accommodation standards are as big a worry as the ability to cope with the academic work.

Today's students are more fortunate than their predecessors as more universities can now offer the security and comfort of in-hall accommodation. But those who do not have this option, such as my son Gavin, will depend on private accommodation.

After a day of accommodation-hunting last September, Gavin found a room in an old property occupied by several students. When he moved in he realised immediately that he had made a mistake. With his ground-floor room next to the kitchen, he had difficulty sleeping and was constantly being disturbed. Binbags and rotting food littered the kitchen. Peeling wallpaper glistened with damp and security was poor: one night his treasured mountain bike was stolen. So where did Gavin go wrong? Ruth Harper, Salford University's Student Union accommodation officer, says: "We try to produce checklists for room-seekers."

When it comes to advertising on campus, many universities allow only those properties that have been inspected and for which up-to-date gas and electrical appliance certificates can be produced. Environmental health officers suggest that there should be no more than six people sharing a single bathroom, toilet and kitchen, and emphasise the importance of checking that there is an adequate means of escape in case of fire.



Senay Boztas, a postgraduate media student at Cardiff, moves into the flat she will share

Accommodation offices offer guidelines for those who have found rooms:

● Always have a copy of the inventory; if the landlord does not provide one, do it yourself. Detail problems to the landlord or agency in writing. The landlord has an obligation to carry out repairs. Try to get agreements checked out before signing and ask current tenants whether they are happy.

● When things do go wrong, go to the student union. If it is a legal matter, the union may fund a meeting with a solicitor.

Many students are unsure about the best time to start hunting for a room. Susan Goddard, accommodation officer at Reading University, admits that students often panic and are looking now in the spring rather than later in the year. "But," she says, "no student is left to sleep rough if they contact us."

Other accommodation offices say that few, if any, students are left without a permanent roof over their head at the start of term. But in the event of someone not finding accommodation, Reading and other universities have strategies in place. Dr Goddard organises a house-hunting day in September during which the student union, the borough council housing advice service, environmental health and third-year students offer invaluable assistance.

Our son's episode ended on a positive note. Although he lost his deposit, he found alternative accommodation quickly with a landlord on the premises. The landlord's wife even baked my son cakes, making him feel right at home.

It pays to be closer to home

THE COURSE, the city and the university's reputation will always be the main factors in choosing where to study, but tight budgets mean accommodation costs are becoming an increasingly important consideration. For students in London, the NUS says, the average weekly rent outside hall is now £87 a week, while similar accommodation in the North and the Midlands is less than £35 a week.

In crude terms, where you go to study and the resultant living costs could determine how many years you keep your overdraft after finishing university. It will also make a big difference to a student's level of solvency and therefore his or her performance. Research by the London University accommodation service shows a link between housing and academic success.

On average, students are paying about 60 per cent of their weekly income on rent, forcing more and *more of them to think twice before* moving away from home to study. At Coventry University, the proportion of students from the immediate region has grown from 42 per cent to 54 per cent in seven years.

Many students like to have their own accommodation in the second and third years. Few universities can guarantee residential places beyond the first year.

The NUS claims that, as more colleges contract out their halls of residence to management companies, *rents are starting to rise at twice the* rate of inflation. The average institutionally provided accommodation costs £48 a week.

Rents are not the only costs for students. In the toughest housing markets, landlords demand retainers for the summer months and higher deposits. The average deposit in London is more than £250.

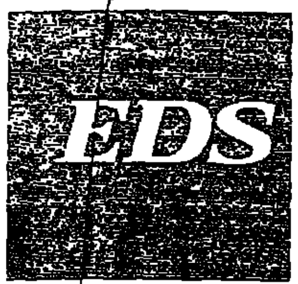
To cover their living costs, 40 per cent of full-time students have to work at part-time jobs. This works to the advantage of some institutions. *Hull University* — where private-sector rents are £26 to £30 a week and a surplus of accommodation means that rents are actually falling — is becoming more popular. Jim Dumsday, the university spokesman, says: "With debt and overdrafts becoming more and more of an issue, the cost of accommodation is moving up in the students' priority tables."

	Av. rents £	Av. deposits £
Private landlord		
Scotland	44	133
Wales	38	75
North West	35	150
North East	34	93
East Anglia	51	216
East Midlands	34	141
West Midlands	33	147
South West	46	183
South East	48	225
London	87	251

Source: NUS Accommodation Costs Survey

HUGH THOMPSON

Running towards the 5hr mark



Here, exclusive to *The Times*, are the finishers in the 1999 Flora London Marathon. The information is provided by EDS, official suppliers of computers to the race, and today includes all those who ran between 4hr 4min 4sec and 4hr 52min 31sec. Names and times of other finishers will be published later this week.



ANTHONY UPTON

On the move: even the London Marathon was not immune from that ubiquitous modern accessory, the mobile phone

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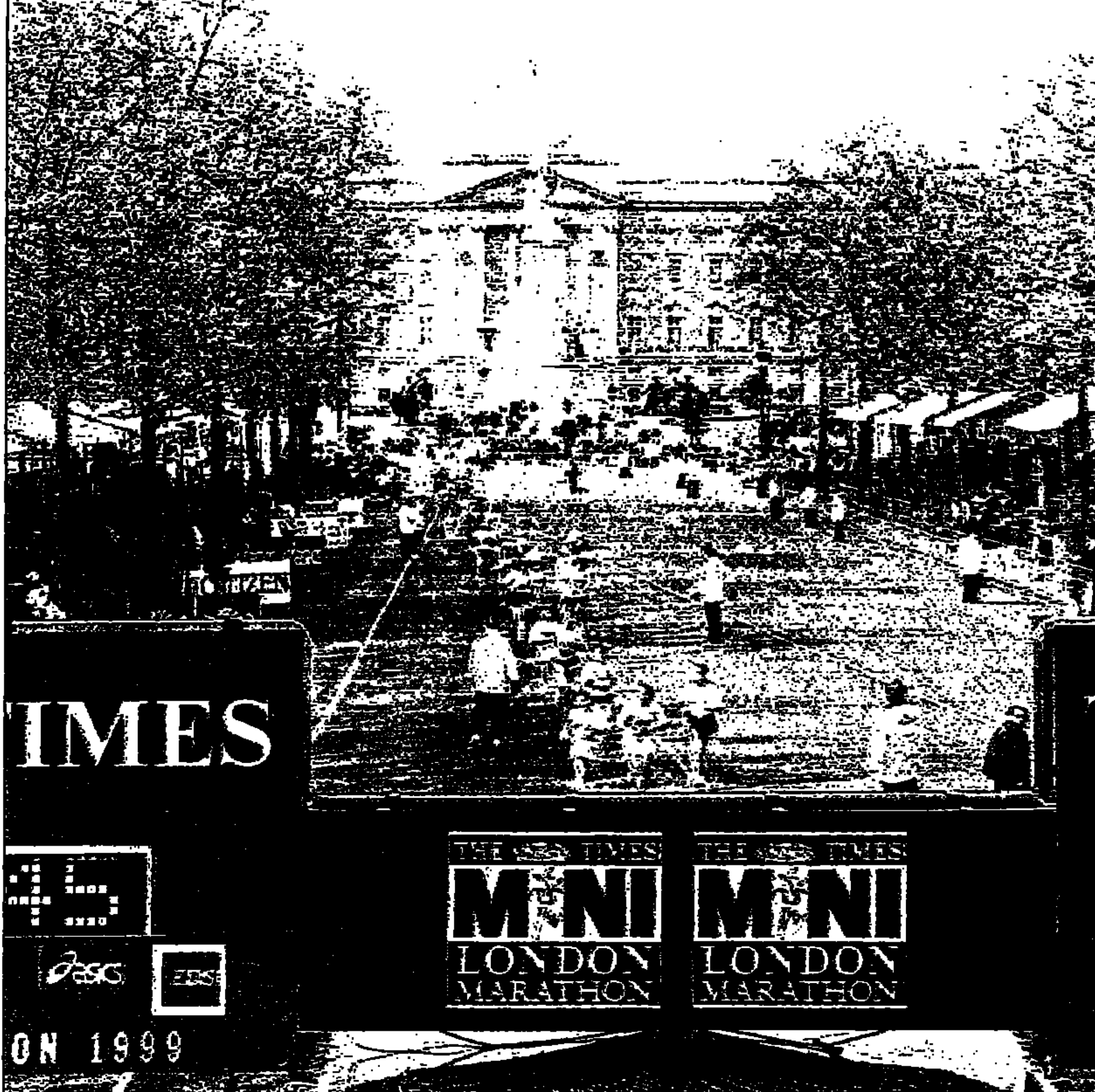
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Finishing straight: Buckingham Palace towers over the competitors as they reach the end of the Mini Marathon

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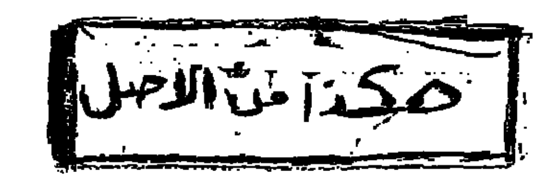
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It's over: a competitor recovers his equilibrium in the spring sunshine after finishing the Marathon on Sunday

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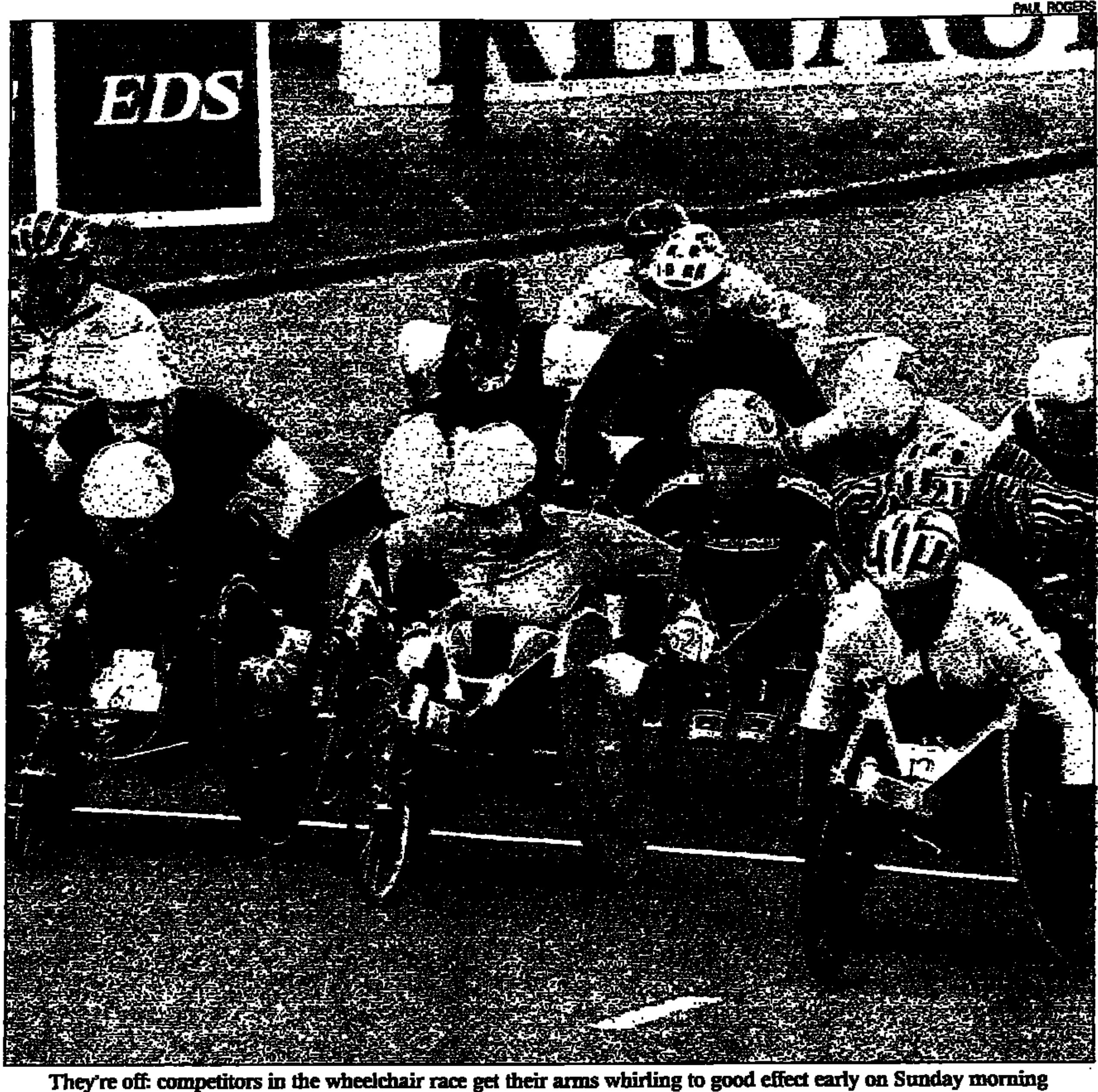
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FLORA LONDON MARATHON



PAUL ROGERS

They're off: competitors in the wheelchair race get their arms whirling to good effect early on Sunday morning

More results tomorrow

CRICKET

Miandad quits as coach after dispute

By Richard Hobson and Pat Gibson

EVEN in the volatile world of Pakistan cricket, the resignation of Javed Miandad as coach yesterday, little more than three weeks before the start of the World Cup, comes as something of a shock. Less surprising is the fact that his decision stems from a dispute inside a notoriously fractious dressing-room.

Although Miandad, the only man to play in all six previous World Cups, originally cited family commitments as the reason for standing down, he later acknowledged that differences with senior players during the Coca-Cola Cup in Sharjah earlier this month had influenced his judgment.

According to reports from Karachi, Miandad, appointed just eight months ago, upset members of the squad by declining to share a gift of 50,000 dirhams (around £9,000) donated by a Pakistan businessman after victory against India in the final.

"The allegations are baseless," Miandad said, "but the reports published indicate that the players do not want me. If that is the case, then I do not want them either."

He was known to have been unhappy at the decision to pick different squads for the event in Sharjah and the World Cup. Asked about the 15 chosen for the World Cup recently, he said: "The chief selector never contacted me, therefore I want to reserve my comments."

Khalid Mahmood, the chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board, declined to comment on a split between the coach and players.

However, he had already spoken to Richard Pybus with a view to the Border coach assisting Miandad throughout the tournament and possibly taking over when Miandad's contract expired at the end of it. Pybus is believed to have told Mahmood that he is available immediately, despite opposition from Dr Ali Bacher, the managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa.

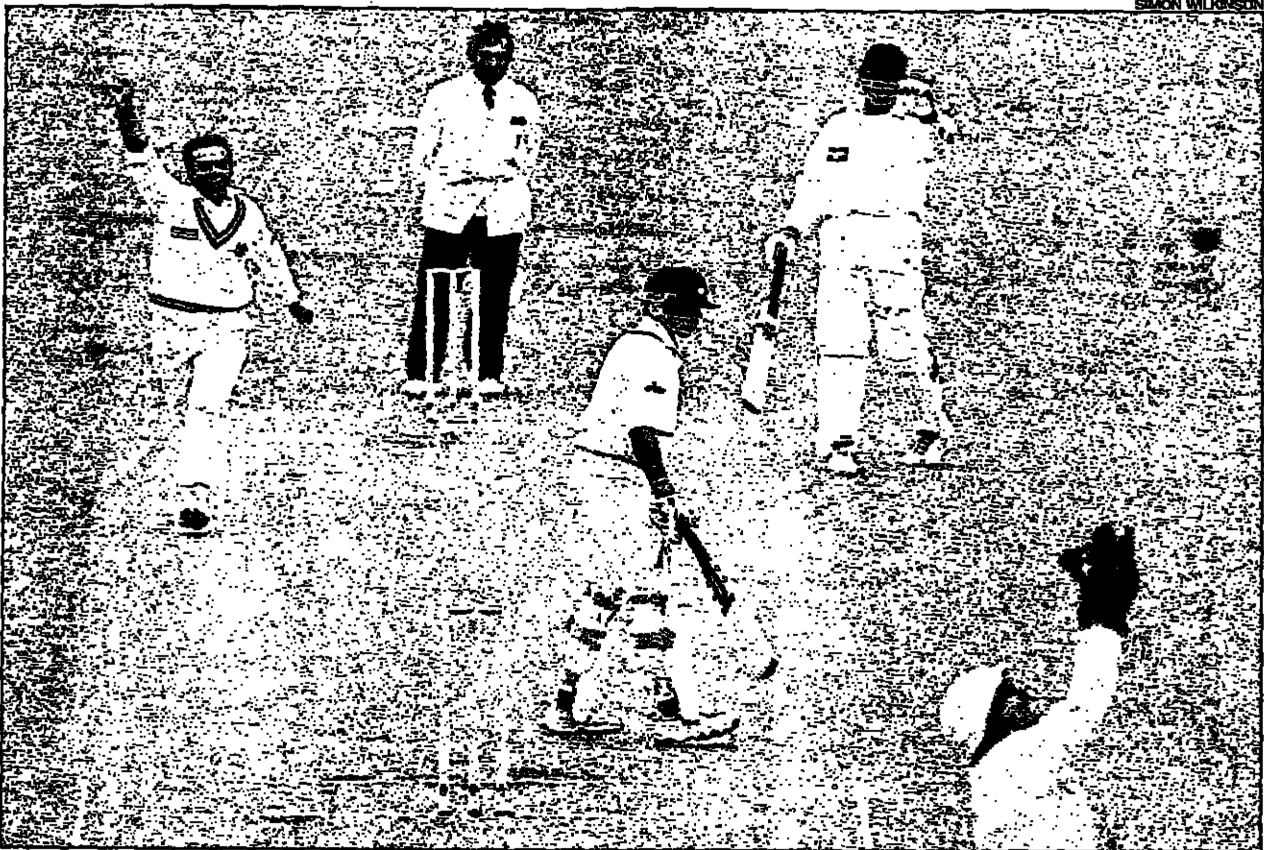
Pakistan are due to arrive in England at the weekend and begin preparations at Derby next Tuesday. Their first game in the World Cup is against the West Indies on May 16.

The sad prospect of the tournament losing one of its greatest attractions was raised yesterday when Brian Lara, who put the smile back on the face of West Indies cricket with two of the most momentous innings in Test history, pulled out of his side's fifth one-day international against Australia in Guyana.

Not the least remarkable aspect of Lara's monumental 213 in Jamaica and 153 not out in Barbados, not to mention his blazing 100 in Antigua, was that he was playing with an injury to his right wrist, received on the tour of South Africa.

He admitted during the Test series that the injury was always on his mind because he could feel the pain when the ball jarred the bat but, for the most part, he fielded at slip and timed the ball so sweetly that it did not inconvenience him too much. It has been different in the frenzy of the one-day internationals, and, in the two games in Trinidad at the weekend, Lara was seen to be favouring his wrist in the field and dropped himself to No 5 in the order.

A crisis at the Board of Control for Cricket has disrupted the preparations of Sri Lanka, the champions. Board officials say that a court order suspending the newly elected committee means that the departure to England may have to be delayed. Elections to the board last month were marred by allegations of malpractice, intimidation and assaults.



SIMON WILKINSON

Smith, the Gloucestershire left-arm bowler, shows his delight after having Blewett caught behind at Headingley

Hayden makes promising start

By Thrasy Petropoulos

HOVE (first day of four; Sussex won toss): Northamptonshire have scored 184 for two wickets against Sussex

BY HIS own admission, Mathew Hayden may not have made the most of his opportunities for Australia, having played in only seven Test matches in five years since making his first appearance against South Africa.

But although he may not have fitted the bill for Australia — at 27 he is still young enough to put that right — Hayden's arrival on a two-year contract to a club badly in need of a lead, both from a captain and an opening batsman, could not have come at a more appropriate moment for Northamptonshire.

There is little to suggest that Hayden will do anything but fill his boots this season, just as he has done over the years for Queensland, and as he did for Hampshire two years ago. In the 54.2 overs possible at Hove yesterday, he moved to within two runs of a century against Sussex, an innings notable for its power and apparent effortlessness.

Sussex were left to rue three missed catches, including a sharp chance offered by Hayden on 39, when Rajesh Rao failed to hold a thick edge high to his left at gully off Mark Robinson.

Rob Bailey and Russell Warren were the other two beneficiaries of fielding lapses. Bailey failed to capitalise on his when he played all around Alex Edwards' first ball and was leg-before, but Warren followed his captain's lead in reaching 39 in a partnership of 127 at the close.

Having moved to 98 with his fifteenth four off Robinson, Hayden gamely accepted the umpires' offer for bad light. Personal ambition aside, he knows that his task has just begun.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: First Innings

R J Bailey lbw b Edwards	26
*M L Hayden not out	98
M B Loye lbw b Martin-Jenkins	9
R J Warren not out	39
Extras (lb 6, w 4, nb 2)	12
Total (2 wkts)	184

D J G Sales, A L Penberthy, G P Swann, †D Ripley, J P Taylor, D Follett and D E Malcolm to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-48, 2-57

BOWLING: Kirtley 12-2-50-0; Martin-Jenkins 13-4-38-1; Edwards 9-2-27-1; Robinson 13.2-3-49-0; Adams 6-2-14-0

SUSSEX: R R Montgomerie, M T E Peirce, *C J Adams, M J Di Venuto, P A Cottey, R K Rao, R S C Martin-Jenkins, A D Edwards, †S Humphries, R J Kirtley, M A Robinson.

Umpires: V A Holder and T E Jesty

Harden repairs damage on debut

By Paul Fitzpatrick

HEADINGLEY (first day of four; Gloucestershire won toss): Yorkshire have scored 196 for seven wickets against Gloucestershire

THE burning question for Gloucestershire this season is how well they will fare without Courtney Walsh, whose 106 wickets represented a crucial contribution to a good year in 1998 when the county finished fourth in the championship. Ian Harvey, an Australian all-rounder, will need no telling that he has an all but impossible task trying to fill the void.

Gloucestershire got by well enough without Walsh yesterday, on a pitch of no great pace but which was unpredictable in bounce and offered persistent movement. Had Walsh been present, however, Yorkshire might have struggled to get much past 100.

That they prospered to the extent they did was due in no small part to the experienced Richard Harden, who held the middle of the innings together after Mike Smith had removed both openers, Michael Vaughan and Greg Blewett, the Australian import, in an impressive new-ball spell.

Harden, 33, was a surprise recruit by a county renowned for home-grown talent. But the former Somerset player averages above 50 against Yorkshire in championship and one-day cricket, statistics which clearly convinced Yorkshire that he could do a worthwhile job for them.

Harden was strokeless at times during his stay of 158 minutes but punctuated a valuable innings of 43 with five handsome boundaries. It was a surprise, when, soon after tea, he cut Harvey to Kim Barnett, at gully.

The other notable contribution to the early part of the innings came from Matthew Wood, a youngster keen to build on a promising debut season. Wood, well-organised and acquisitive, rose above the constraints of the pitch before following a widish delivery from Tim Hancock.

Yorkshire's most fruitful stand, however, came as the light began to fade, a half-century partnership between Gavin Hamilton and Richard Blakey getting them close to 200, a more than useful score on this pitch.

YORKSHIRE: First Innings

G S Blewett c Russell b Smith	6
M P Vaughan b Smith	2
*D Byas c Barnett b Harvey	11
M J Wood c Russell b Hancock	36
R J Harden c Barnett b Harvey	43
C White c Russell b Alleyne	15
†R J Blakey lbw b Smith	21
G M Hamilton not out	46
D Gough not out	1
Extras (lb 7, w 2, nb 6)	15
Total (7 wkts)	196

R J Sidebottom and M J Hoggard to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-13, 2-14, 3-48, 4-88, 5-115, 6-127, 7-193

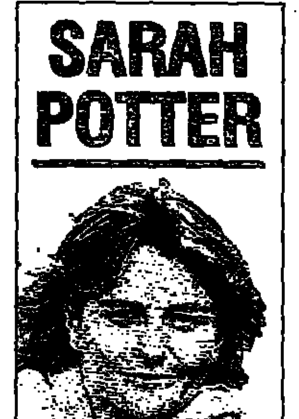
BOWLING: Smith 18-5-48-3; Lewis 18-2-39-0; Alleyne 13-6-18-1; Harvey 18-7-38-2; Hancock 8-4-15-1; Barnett 9-3-16-0; Ball 2.1-0-15-0

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: K J Barnett, T H C Hancock, D R Hewson, *M W Alleyne, M G N Windows, I J Harvey, J N Snape, †R C Russell, M C J Ball, J Lewis, A M Smith.

Umpires: D J Constant and B Leadbeater.

Yankey looks a sure bet at Highbury

SARAH POTTER



One FA Cup will be leaving the Highbury trophy cabinet for a northern home next month and the FA Carling Premiership silverware could follow a few weeks later. Just as well, then, that Arsenal Ladies, the club's other double-winners last season, are keeping their chances of a domestic treble alive.

Football's glamour girls have already retained the League Cup and want a repeat performance against Southampton Saints in the FA Cup final on May 3. Like their male counterparts, though, the women must hope for the mistakes of others if they are to win the Premiership title. Croydon are three points clear with two games left, so Arsenal must beat Ilkeston on Sunday to keep the treble bid rolling.

Central to their success is Rachel Yankey, 19, the England winger, who has the same predatory pace and twinkle-toed skills of a player she has reason to dislike. Unlike most of her team-mates at Highbury, Yankey is a fervent Arsenal supporter and was at Villa Park to see that Ryan Giggs goal in the FA Cup semi-final replay against Manchester United. "I still can't believe we lost," she said. "I couldn't admire his goal when it happened — I was too gutted — but looking at it since it was fantastic."

> 'Some say we are pampered at Arsenal'

Arsenal Ladies love to beat their northern rivals, Doncaster Belles, just as much as the men savour a win over United. No surprise, then, that Yankey claims her two goals against Doncaster in the FA Cup semi-finals last month were her highlight of the season. "You could call them easy goals," she said, "but when there's a final at stake, even a tap-in makes you nervous."

Vic Akers, the first-team's kit man, started Arsenal Ladies 12 years ago and is still their manager. According to Yankey, he is cajoling her to claim more "easy" goals. "He reckons I'd score loads more if I followed up our shots," she said.

Nonetheless, Yankey shares a prolific striking partnership with Marianne Spacey, a former England centre forward. "Max is the leading scorer in the league and I'm just behind her," Yankey said.

Arsenal have the sponsorship and support that other clubs in the top flight can only envy. The men provide training facilities and their luxury coach for away games, while Nike supply kit. "Some say we're pampered," Yankey said, "but it's nice to be recognised for doing something well."

Only the eagle-eyed, though, would have spotted her in the BBC series, *Playing The Field*. Yankey's mother, Jean, who watches her daughter home and away, can tell you that the character, "Shazza", was actually Rachel whenever a football had to be kicked. "I had to play football for about 20 minutes, but the rest was a bit boring," she said.

Which is not how she described the open-topped bus to celebrate the men's and women's doubles last season. "The roads were heaving with red and white, so it was really spine-tingling," she said.

The "obstructed view" seats at Highbury, which the club gives to the women players, were not good enough for Yankey. Scraping together £220 to pay for a season ticket cannot have been easy, for Arsenal's female equivalent of Marc Overmars is unemployed. No matter, it seems, for this is a footballer who belongs at Highbury.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

In the quarter-final of the 1998 Gold Cup David Mossop's team narrowly beat Richard Winter's team. Paul Hackett for the winners had a difficult defence on this hand from the match.

Dealer West — Love all — IMPs

North: ♠ 9 4 ♡ 7 6 5 ♢ A Q J 6 5 ♣ 7 6 4

West: ♠ Q 8 3 2 ♡ Q 10 4 ♢ K 7 3 ♣ K J 5

East: ♠ 7 6 ♡ K J 9 2 ♢ 10 9 8 ♣ 9 8 3 2

South: ♠ A K J 10 5 ♡ A 8 3 ♢ 4 2 ♣ A Q 10

W	N	E	S
Pass	Pass	1 H	Double
2 NT	3 D	Pass	3 S
Pass	4 S	All Pass	

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: four of hearts.

West (Paul Hackett) bid Two No-Trumps over South's double of Tony Forrester's One Heart opening to show a good raise to Three Hearts (he and Forrester play five-card majors). The subsequent auction demonstrated that someone did not have his bid. South having adopted a very strong sequence, so Hackett wisely refrained from doubling Four Spades.

Declarer won the first heart, crossed to dummy with a diamond to the jack, and finessed the jack of spades. Hackett took the queen, and continued hearts, and was on play after winning the third round. At this point he returned a club, and now declarer had the rest of the tricks.

The winning defence was for West to return a diamond instead of the club. That cuts off dummy's fourth diamond trick before trumps are drawn. My informant did not give me the diamond pips, and it is certainly possible that West could not tell whether East had two or three diamonds. But the bidding should have given West the right answer. When he was in with the third heart he should have been able to tell South had the ace of clubs:

♠ A K J 10 5
♡ A 8 3
♢ x x
♣ Q x x

is not strong enough to double One Heart and then bid spades. With that hand South would overcall One Spade. Hence South was marked with the ace of clubs, and West's only chance was the communication-cutting play.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

Veteran's performance

Viktor Korchnoi, 68, twice challenger for the world championship, turned in an amazing performance in the Dos Hermanas tournament. He lost only two games and outdistanced Viswanathan Anand, the second highest ranked player in the world.

I have already published Korchnoi's win from the tournament, as well as his loss to Michael Adams. Today's game completes the selection of Korchnoi's decisive games.

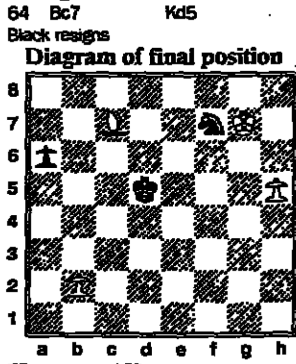
White: Boris Gelfand
Black: Viktor Korchnoi
Dos Hermanas 1999

Queen's Gambit Accepted

	White	Black
1	d4	d5
2	c4	dxc4
3	Nf3	e6
4	e3	Nf6
5	Bxc4	c5
6	0-0	Nc6
7	Qe2	cxd4
8	Rd1	Be7
9	exd4	0-0
10	a3	Nd5
11	Nc3	Re8
12	Ba2	Bxa3
13	Nxd5	exd5
14	Qb5	Bd6
15	Bxd5	h6
16	Ne5	Bxe5
17	dxe5	Qc7
18	Bf4	Be6
19	Bf3	a6
20	Qc5	Rac8
21	Rac1	Qe7
22	Be3	Bb3
23	Qxe7	Rxe7
24	Rd3	Ba4
25	Bg4	Rd8
26	Rd6	Ra8
27	f4	Nd8
28	Rc8	Rxc8
29	Bxc8	Ne6
30	f5	Nf8
31	Bd4	Rc7
32	Rd8	Bd7
33	Bxd7	Rxd7
34	Rxd7	Nxd7
35	Kf2	g6
36	g4	h5
37	e6	fxe6
38	fxe6	Nb8
39	Kf3	Nc6
40	Bf6	Kf8
41	gxh5	gxh5
42	Ke4	Na7
43	Kd5	Ke8
44	Bd4	Nb5
45	Bb6	Ke7
46	Ke5	Ke8
47	h3	Ke7
48	h4	Ke8
49	Kf6	Nd6
50	Kg6	Nc4
51	Bc5	b6
52	Bd4	Ke7
53	Kxh5	Kxe6
54	Kg6	Nd6
55	Bxb6	Nf5
56	h5	Ne7+
57	Kg7	Nf5+
58	Kg6	Nh4+
59	Kg7	Nf5+
60	Kf8	Kf6
61	Bd8+	Ke6
62	Kg8	Nh6+
63	Kg7	Nf7
64	Bc7	Kd5

Black resigns

Diagram of final position



Keene online
You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from *Times* readers will be published either here or in the Saturday *Times Weekend* column.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

FLEECH
a. Flattery
b. Suffolk woollen cloth
c. A whinger

GETON
a. A small flag
b. A sergeant's exhortation
c. A climber's aid

GODOWN
a. An evensong canticle
b. A night-dress
c. A warehouse

GROLL
a. A Viennese cream puff
b. A goblin
c. An idiot

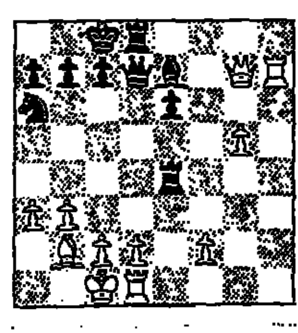
Answers on page 54

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Heimrath — Gold, Bad Zwesten 1999.

White has become overly carried away with his own plans and has made a fatal oversight. How did Black continue?



Solution on page 54

SNOOKER

Davis finds cruel defeat hard to bear

By Phil Yates

WHILE the level of disappointment was not quite as acute as in 1985, Steve Davis still found his 10-9 defeat by Joe Perry in the first round of the Embassy world championship at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, yesterday a crushing blow.

Fourteen years ago, Davis famously lost 18-17 to Dennis Taylor on the black with the title at stake, having led 8-0. He recovered from a 7-2 overnight deficit against Perry to force a deciding frame but, even with momentum as a powerful ally, he was again denied.

Perry, the world No 74, became one of the select group of players to make a century on his debut at the Crucible but his commanding first-session advantage owed more to a succession of unforced errors from the former champion.

On the resumption yesterday, Davis upped his tempo. Breaks of 51, 42, 64, 70, 46 and 45 allied to a refreshingly positive approach — he willingly took on the long pots that he has so often ignored of late — helped him to draw level at 9-9.

Leading 52-0 in the deciding frame, Davis overcut a tricky blue to a middle pocket but, even then, with the remaining balls awkwardly located, it was difficult to imagine that Perry, so short of experience and table time during the session, could possibly win.

Having scored 24, Perry enjoyed an outrageous slice of good fortune. He fluked the last red, flicking it in off the pink and in doing so was doubly blessed in that he both brought the pink into the open and obtained perfect position on the brown.

"I was so nervous I had to start taking deep breaths. My legs were like jelly," Perry, who exploited his lucky break to clear the colours and reach the last 16 of a world-ranking tournament for the first time since turning professional in 1991, said.

Last month, after losing 5-4 on the black to Stephen Hendry at the China International in Shanghai, Davis amusingly apologised to the local media for a delay in attending his press conference by saying: "I've been trying to kill myself."

Yesterday, he confessed: "I just swore and swore my head off for half an hour. It's never nice to lose, particularly here. Of course I am sick, he fluked the last red for God's sake."

While Davis did not lament his ill-luck any further, preferring to state repeatedly that it was the best snooker he has played at the championship for a decade, his frustration was obvious for he must now rely on other results — such as Alan McManus defeating Jimmy White and John Parrott beating Chris Small — to extend his tenure in the top 16 into a twentieth consecutive season.

Hendry, who replaced Davis as the game's predominant force in 1990 and has also triumphed at the Crucible on six occasions, was in danger of first-round elimination for the second year in succession, after losing to White 12 months ago.

The Scot, 5-4 ahead of Paul Hunter overnight, fell 8-7 adrift on the restart before displaying his renowned resilience. When Hunter overcut a red to a middle pocket with the sixteenth frame in the balance, Hendry put together a run of 36 to level at 8-8.

Hunter, one of the best players to emerge from the qualifying competition, then fell victim to the increasing pressure.

His missed pink in the next frame led to a 68 break from Hendry and when Hunter jawed a straight blue to a balk pocket in the next, Hendry pounced with a break of 93 to complete a 10-8 victory.

"I'd have been in a state of shock if I'd lost, but I must admit there were a couple of times when I started to wonder what I'd do with myself over the next fortnight. I would have been especially gutted because I know I am playing as good as ever," Hendry said.

Hendry, winner of four events during a season highlighted by his capture of the Scottish Open and Benson and Hedges Irish Masters titles, will meet James Wattana, of Thailand, in the last 16.

LINKS

WEBSITES: www.embassysnooker.com - official tournament site www.snookerimages.co.uk - general information.

TELEVISION: BBC1, 2.30pm; BBC2, 3.30, 6.45, 9.50pm.



An elated Perry salutes his supporters after sinking the black in the deciding frame of his first-round match against Davis

SAILING

Beadsworth on trail of Olympic medal

From Edward Gorman
Sailing Correspondent
in Hyeres

ANDY BEADSWORTH, for so long the leading British Soling skipper, is going through a familiar routine here on the Côte d'Azur. Like most of the Great Britain team, he and his crew have been billeted in the cheap studio apartments just behind the marina. Even with funding from the National Lottery, life is run on a "student-style" budget.

Yesterday, Beadsworth was looking ahead, to the chance of winning that elusive Olympic medal, in Sydney next summer. "We should have won a medal last time," he said. "There were many reasons why we didn't. We've got a better foundation to build on now and the time to do it. If you look at where we were four years ago compared to where we are now, we are ahead of the game."

But Beadsworth's disappointing fourth place in Savannah in 1996 underlined how difficult it is to produce the form necessary to win a medal on the day. Even now, he believes that there are up to ten crews in the Soling fleet capable of winning races in Sydney and among them are some formidable opponents — including Jochen Schumann, of Germany, the triple gold medal-winner, and Georgy Shayduko, of Russia, who won silver in Savannah.

Beadsworth has no doubt that the margins between the top boats and the also-rans in both the fleet-racing and match-racing disciplines that make up the Olympic Soling challenge are much tighter than last time round. "The biggest change is in the ability of the other competitors," he said. "At Savannah there were only a handful of people who could sail a Soling fast and match race, now virtually everyone can match race."

Rule changes have made the Soling medal more of a compromise than ever, with 12 of the 16 boats that qualify for the Games progressing to a complex match-racing eliminator after eight fleet races. Beadsworth has won in both fleet and match disciplines over the past 12 months and seems unruffled by the new arrangements. But he has yet to secure a place among the 16 that will make up the Games fleet.

The last chance, at which four more places will be decided, is the class European championships in Norway at the end of July. Among those still hunting a place are Schumann and Philippe Presti, of France. "Not having qualified yet is irritating more than worrying," Beadsworth said.

"It's all about winning a medal so you have to believe you are going to go to the Games. Realistically I can't see us not qualifying, but these things do happen," he added. Yesterday Beadsworth finished a consistent enough fleet-racing series to qualify in sixth place for the last eight that go into the match racing finale today and tomorrow.

RUGBY UNION

WRU and rebel clubs close in on agreement

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

THE intensely damaging saga of Wales's two rebel clubs may come to an end tomorrow if the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) can announce a face-saving formula that will restore Cardiff and Swansea to the fold. The effect of their 18-month breakaway, however, will take longer to erase.

Talks have continued this week with both the union and club representatives acknowledging that a united way forward must be found.

The WRU's legal advisers and the Cardiff board must ratify the results but it is likely that television money, withheld by the WRU since Cardiff declared their intention of playing against England's leading clubs, will be paid and that the threat of legal action against Swansea for non-repayment of loans will be dropped.

But both clubs will be expected to pay fines of £150,000 imposed by the WRU for playing unsanctioned games and both will have to acknowledge a commitment to European competition.

Should all this happen, the English clubs will breathe a sigh of relief: their relationship with Cardiff and Swansea, driven through by wealthy club owners, began in a covert manner and it has been a running sore ever since.

The quality of matches in the Anglo-Welsh series has been uneven to say the least, while the need to cater for two "outsiders" during negotiations over purely domestic affairs has been damaging. It has caused great resentment among England's second division clubs while the top Welsh clubs that have remained within the WRU orbit will not be universally thrilled if Cardiff and Swansea automatically receive two of the five qualifying places for Europe next season.

Indeed, Lyn Jones, the former Wales flanker who now coaches Neath, has already launched a scathing attack on Cardiff's "cheque-book" policy and the quality of rugby that they have played. "You can see by their performances on the pitch that the hunger has gone from their players," Jones said.

"They are having it too easy. Cardiff should cut salaries, instead of forcing other clubs into paying the same unsustainable wages as them." There has been considerable criticism in Wales of Cardiff's coaching panel, led by Terry Holmes and Charlie Faulkner, fuelled last weekend by the heavy defeat by Llanelli in the SWALEC Cup semi-finals.

Cardiff are also wrestling with their neighbours across the Severn, Bristol. Both clubs have made offers for Chris Wyatt, the Llanelli and Wales lock, and Bristol have also made a bid for Jonathan Humphreys, the Cardiff hooker and former Wales captain.

Bristol are seeking, too, to tempt Garath Archer away from Newcastle and back to the West Country, where he first made his name.

SQUASH

Nottingham prove worthy champions

By Colin McQuillan

CAPITAL One Nottingham took the SRA National Squash League (NSL) title for the first time late on Tuesday night with a 4-1 win over UK Packaging in the final play-off at St Albans. Nottingham, who defeated TSM Duffield, of Derbyshire, the defending league champions, in the regional pools, cruised unopposed into the final when Potters Bar were expelled from the league for failing to field a team.

The undefeated fifth string woman, Natalie Grainger, of South Africa, was detained by the semi-finals of the WISPA world grand prix play-offs in Egypt, but Nottingham swept resolutely through the men's line-up put out by the UK Packaging squad from the Connaught Club, in Chingford. Simon Parke, the England No 2, and David Evans, the Welsh champion, led the rout with four-game victories over Tim Garner and Julian Wellings respectively, with Lee Beachill and Jason Nicolle following up with straight-games wins over Stuart Cowie and Lee Jemmett.

The women's point went to Linda Charman, but not before Tania Bailey, the world junior champion brought in to replace Grainger, had won the opening game and taken the third to a tie-break.

"We were bitterly disappointed by Potters Bar failing to arrive for the semi-final," Phil Songhurst, the team manager, said. "We had regional television units already set up. But the first title for the club more than makes up for it."

Parke and Grainger remained the only undefeated players in the league, finishing with seven wins in seven appearances. UK Packaging, who include the world No 1, Peter Nicol, and the world junior champion, Ong Beng Hee, in their squad but failed to utilise them in their NSL campaign, defeated UNW Northumberland in the semi-finals.

SPORT IN BRIEF

■ **RUGBY LEAGUE:** Keighley Cougars yesterday released Lee Crooks, their coach for 12 months, after the Northern Ford Premiership side's fifth league defeat of the season. Crooks, the former Great Britain forward, said it was a financial decision and he had resigned by mutual agreement. Gateshead Thunder's home JJB Super League match against Wigan Warriors, on August 1, has been switched to Tynecastle, Edinburgh, where a franchise has been mooted.

■ **REAL TENNIS:** Kate Leeming, of Australia, the eighth seed for the Guy Salmon women's world championship, was scratched from the event after arriving 15 minutes late for her second-round match because of a traffic accident on the M3. Although the match was played, with Leeming winning in straight sets, the organisers decided that she should be defaulted.

■ **NETBALL:** Five Derbyshire players have been included in the England squad to tour New Zealand and Australia next month. They will take part in the annual *NZ Superstars* series for the first time before travelling to Australia.

ENGLAND: J Zinzan (captain), H Lonsdale, S Mikoloma, H Manufor (all Middlesex), O Murphy, K Aspinall, S Phillips, A Astle, N Siddall (all Derbyshire), A-M Muller, L Law, A Newton (all Essex Met), E Cormack (Kent), L Carpenter (Surrey), T Neville (Greater Manchester), L Stanley (North Durham).

■ **CYCLING:** Bradley Wiggins, the world junior pursuit champion, was named yesterday for the Great Britain team in the seven-day, 730-miles PruTour next month, together with Stuart Dangerfield, the national 25-miles time-trial champion, and Rob Hayles. The PruTour starts in London on May 23 and ends in Edinburgh on May 29.

■ **BOWLS:** Wales, who are preparing for the 2000 world outdoor championships in Johannesburg, won the first of four internationals against Botswana, triumphing in all six matches in the diamond-mining town of Jwaneng. After a shaky start, Will Thomas recovered his poise to score two full houses on his way to an excellent 25-16 victory over Tony Allen.

RALLYING

Kit-car triumph puts title chasers in panic

From Jeremy Hart in Lloret de Mar

PHILIPPE BUGALSKI, of France, made history yesterday by driving the first rally kit car to victory in a round of the world championship. He won the Catalonia Rally here on the Costa Brava by 32 seconds from Didier Auriol, his compatriot, in a Toyota. In third place was Tommi Makinen, the world champion, in a Mitsubishi.

Bugalski, 35, the French champion, led from the start of the leg on Tuesday after Jesus Puras, his team-mate, failed to start his identical Citroën Xsara. No driver was able to get close to the two-wheel-drive French cars. The heavier world rally cars, which use four-wheel drive, were at a great disadvantage on the smooth Spanish mountain roads. Citroën only enters three rounds of the world championship and specialises in making cars for the French domestic series, on asphalt.

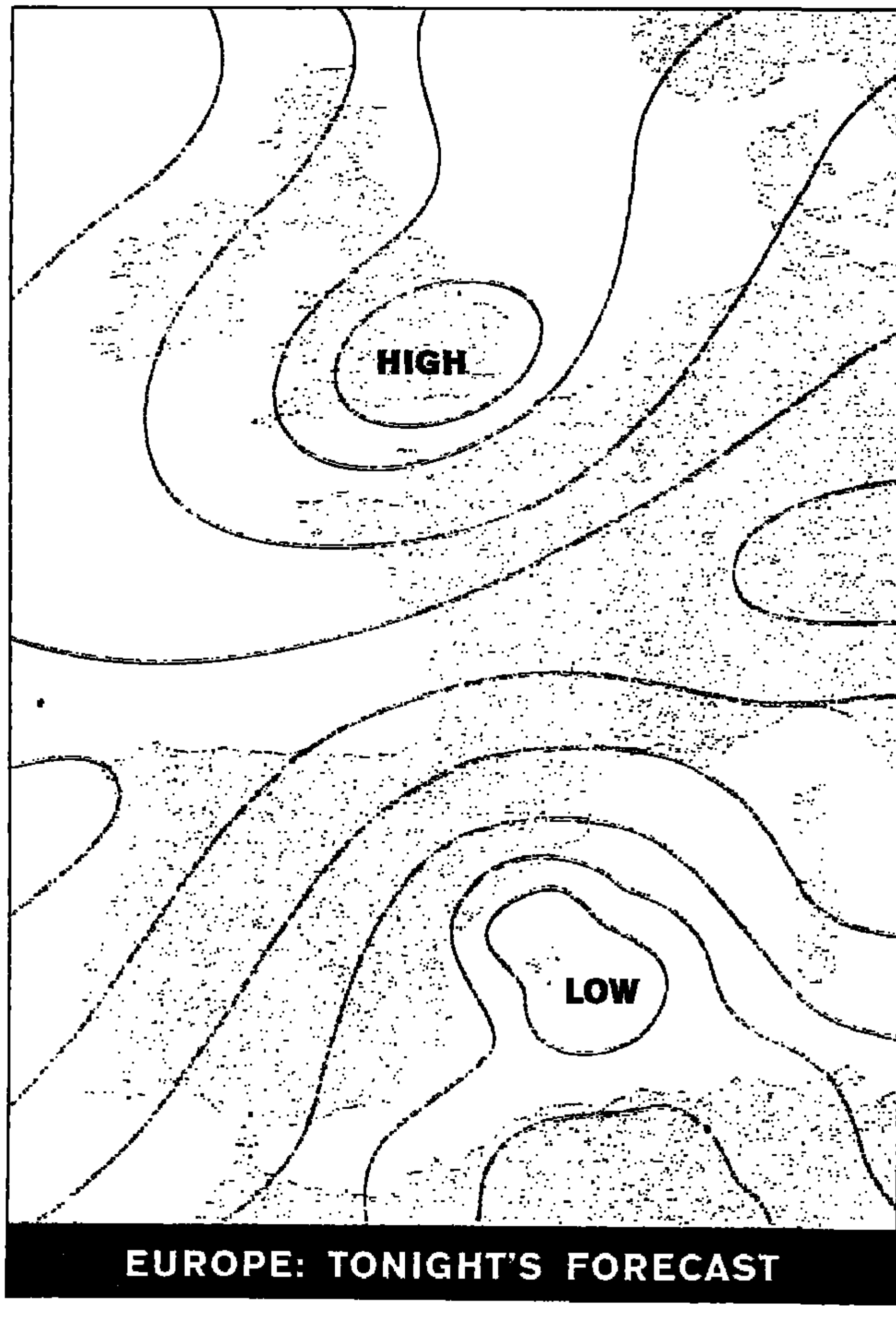
"I knew we would be quick, but to have held off the championship regulars is thanks to Citroën. I only drove," a tearful Bugalski said. "Starting the last stages, I was very nervous. I hardly slept last night but I needn't have worried."

Bugalski's win was a blow for the seasoned championship contenders. Auriol desperately tried to close the gap in his Toyota but rain, forecast for the final stages, which would have benefited the heavier cars did not materialise.

"Philippe deserves the victory," Auriol, the winner last year, said. "But they have taken points from the drivers' championship and that is not right. They only do a few rallies and they could end up taking the title from me."

Makinen snatched third place on the penultimate stage after Carlos Sainz, the local favourite, had a puncture and battery failure and dropped out of the points. The Finn, who leads the championship from Auriol by just three points, incurred a penalty of a minute for a jump-start on Tuesday.

In fifth place, behind Freddy Loix, of Belgium, was Richard Burns, the Briton, in a Subaru. *Burns* was also penalised on Tuesday for a jump-start and suffered with lack of grip from his tyres. "Until there is more grip, any chance of winning *is* far off," a disgruntled Burns said.

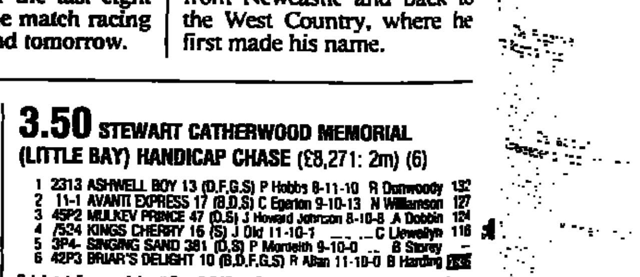


Best of luck to Chelsea for their match against Real Mallorca.



Official sponsors of Chelsea F.C.

PERTH



ROB WRIGHT

2.20 Mely Moss
2.50 Prominent Profile
3.20 Dun Coady
3.50 Ashwell Boy
4.20 Prophits Pride
4.50 Grooving
5.20 Country House

Carl Evans: 2.20 Mely Moss.

GOING: HEAVY (7.15AM INSPECTION) SIS

2.20 ROYAL CALEDONIAN HUNT HUNTERS CHASE (£2,931: 3m) (9 runners)

1 P2-4 ALI'S ALIBI 41 (T,G,S) Allan Dickman 12-12-0 Mr C Mulhall (5) 80
2 5/42 CASTLEROYAL 16 (D,F,G) B McNichol 10-12-0 Mr J Crowley 118
3 3212 CHARLIEADAMS 19 (D,G,S) A J Martin (Ire) 9-12-0 Mr S McGonagle (7) —
4 3B02 DASHMAR 11P (D,G) K Robson 12-12-0 Mr R Morgan (7) —
5 43P2 FISCAL POLICY 6 (D,F,G,S) A Trotter 11-12-0 Mr R Trotter (7) 103
6 -PP0 MAJIC RAIN 10 (D,F,G,S) Allan Dickman 14-12-0 Mr W L Morgan (7) —
7 32/2 MELY MOSS 14 (G,S) C Egerton 8-12-0 Mr A Dempsey [illegible]
8 -233 MINERS MELODY 6 (D,F,G,S) C Grant 11-12-0 Mrs S Grant (7) 101
9 PU04 MURDER MOSS 10 (D,S) S Coltherd 9-12-0 Mr S Coltherd (7) 79

4-7 Mely Moss, 7-1 Castleroyal, Charlieadams, 10-1 Fiscal Policy, 12-1 Miners Melody, 16-1 Ali's Alibi, 25-1 Dashmar, Murder Moss, 50-1 Majic Rain.

2.50 NELSON MORRISON AGENCY FUTURE CHAMPIONS NH NOVICES HURDLE (£7,376: 3m 110yd) (8)

1 211 HOT TO TROT 57 (D,G,S) K Bailey 6-11-8 N Williamson 117
2 6445 MR CAVALLO 10 (F,G,S) Miss L Russell 7-11-8 G Lee 98
3 0231 VALIGAN 40 (D,S) L Lungo 6-11-8 W Dowling 105
4 3211 YOU'RE AGOODUN 8 (B,D,G,S) M Pipe 7-11-8 A Maguire 109
5 1303 PROMINENT PROFILE 13 (D,G,S) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-4 C Llewellyn [illegible]
6 4533 PESSIMISTIC DICK 17 (B) Mrs D Thomson 6-10-12 M Foster 81
7 PP00 SMIDDY LAD 3 (T) R Shiels 8-10-12 S Melrose 49
8 5212 THE HILL HAS MOVED 64 (BF,S) P Hobbs 6-10-12 R Dunwoody 58

11-8 Prominent Profile, 7-2 Hot To Trot, You're Agoodun, 7-1 Valigan, 10-1 The Hill Has Moved, 20-1 Mr Cavallo, 25-1 Pessimistic Dick, 33-1 Smiddy Lad.

3.20 GOOCH WEBSTER MAIDEN CHASE (£4,403: 2m) (9)

1 F523 CASTLE CLEAR 6 (D,S) Mrs M Reveley 6-11-7 Mr A Dempsey [illegible]
2 P6FP DISTINCT 31 A Whillans 6-11-7 A Dobbin 55
3 6-36 DUN COADY 152 (S) K Bailey 10-11-7 N Williamson 66
4 PP55 ISLE OF RHUM 31 P Monteith 7-11-7 B Storey —
5 4P-P JACK DORY 187 Mrs S Bradburne 7-11-7 C McCormack (3) —
6 -0P6 PERSUASIVE TALENT 112 (B) D Lamb 8-11-7 J Burke 31
7 -450 SPECTRE BROWN 202 D Nolan 9-11-7 D Verco 45
8 00U0 DRUMDONNA 24 P Beaumont 9-11-2 B Grattan (3) —
9 64P5 POLITICAL MANDATE 10 R Nixon 6-11-2 S Taylor 79

EVENS Castle Clear, 6-4 Dun Coady, 12-1 Political Mandate, 20-1 Spectre Brown, Drumdonna, 25-1 Distinct, Isle Of Rhum, 33-1 others.

3.50 STEWART CATHERWOOD MEMORIAL (LITTLE BAY) HANDICAP CHASE (£8,271: 2m) (6)

1 2313 ASHWELL BOY 13 (D,F,G,S) P Hobbs 8-11-10 R Dunwoody 132
2 11-1 AVANTI EXPRESS 17 (B,D,S) C Egerton 9-10-13 N Williamson 127
3 45P2 MULKEV PRINCE 47 (D,S) J Howard Johnson 8-10-8 A Dobbin 124
4 /524 KINGS CHERRY 16 (S) J Old 11-10-1 C Llewellyn 118
5 3P4- SINGING SAND 381 (D,S) P Monteith 9-10-0 B Storey —
6 42P3 BRIAR'S DELIGHT 10 (B,D,F,G,S) R Allan 11-10-0 B Harding [illegible]

2-1 Avanti Express, Ashwell Boy, 7-2 Kings Cherry, 11-2 Mulkev Prince, 14-1 others.

4.20 GLOBAL MARINE SELLING HURDLE (£2,905: 2m 110yd) (9)

1 32- CAPTAIN TANCRED 364 (D,S) B Ellison 11-12-0 N Horrocks (3) 75
2 240P COURT JOKER 31 (G) H Alexander 7-11-7 R Guest 67
3 03-3 PROPHITS PRIDE 12F (D,F) P Monteith 7-11-7 L Cooper (7) 78
4 2F00 HARKNESS WARRIOR 13 (T) H Alexander 5-11-0 DOUBTFUL [illegible]
5 P530 JUST JAKE 17 J Jefferson 6-11-0 M Mello (7) 69
6 006 MOLLINSBURN 68 Mrs M Reveley 8-11-0 Mr T Comerford (7) 89
7 P600 GUILE POINT 10 (B) D Lamb 8-10-9 J Burke 60
8 PP65 MEADOWLECK 35 W Young 10-10-9 Mr T Davidson (7) 22
9 2000 COCKSURE 13 (T) A J Martin (Ire) 4-10-8 A Maguire —

11-4 Prophits Pride, 3-1 Mollinsburn, 4-1 Captain Tancred, 6-1 Cocksure, 7-1 Just Jake, 12-1 Court Joker, Guile Point, 14-1 others.

4.50 TOTE HANDICAP HURDLE (£5,898: 2m 4f 110yd) (10)

1 3600 OUT RANKING 15 (D,F,G,S) M Pipe 7-11-10 A Maguire 110
2 6100 KING OF THIEVES 12 (C,G,S) C Mann 7-11-3 R Dunwoody 109
3 33P2 VALEDICTORY 17 (D,S) P Monteith 6-11-2 L Wyer [illegible]
4 /P43 ROSENCRANTZ 14 (F,G) Miss V Williams 7-11-1 N Williamson —
5 4621 HEART OF AVONDALE 10 (F,S) L Lungo 6-11-1 (6ex) Mr B Gibson (5) 121
6 350P JUSTIN MAC 40 (F,G,S) J FitzGerald 8-10-9 P Niven 125
7 2236 GROOVING 16 (F,G,S) J Howard Johnson 10-10-9 Mr J Crowley (5) 114
8 0225 COTTSTOWN BOY 6 (CD,G,S) Mrs S Bradburne 8-10-9 Mr M Bradburne (3) 114
9 2441 CRYSTAL GIFT 24 (D,G,S) A Whillans 7-10-8 N Horrocks (3) 115
10 -P4P BOURBON DYNASTY 136 (S) N Richards 6-10-0 A Dobbin —

4-1 Crystal Gift, 9-2 Out Ranking, 5-1 Cottstown Boy, 11-2 Heart Of Avondale, 6-1 Valedictory, 8-1 Grooving, 10-1 King Of Thieves, 12-1 others.

5.20 S.B.J. NELSON STEAVENSON MARES NOVICES HURDLE (£5,654: 3m 110yd) (7)

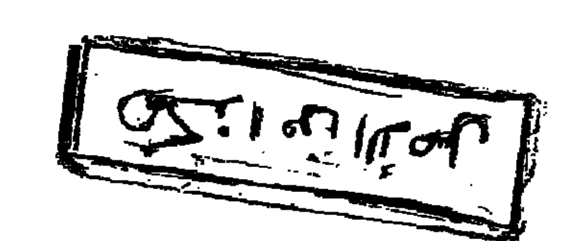
1 2410 LADY OF GORTMERRON 8 (D,G,S) N Twiston-Davies 7-11-10 C Llewellyn
2 3-21 COUNTRY HOUSE 154 (G) J Old 8-11-7 R Dunwoody
3 5-14 MYSTERE 154 (BF,S) K Bailey 6-11-7 N Williamson
4 -052 CHANTILLY ROSE 27 Miss R Brewis 7-11-1 DOUBTFUL
5 4656 DUN ROSE 27 Mrs J Storey 5-11-1 A Dobbin
6 0460 HEAVENLY THOUGHT 27 (B) Mrs D Thomson 8-11-1 D Parker
7 3-46 SOLWAY ROSE 17 J J O'Neill 5-11-1 DOUBTFUL

11-8 Country House, 15-8 Lady Of Gortmerron, 9-4 Mystere, 14-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: M Pipe, 5 winners from 6 runners, 83.3%; A J Martin, 3 from 6, 50.0%; P Hobbs, 13 from 27, 48.1%; J FitzGerald, 7 from 19, 36.8%; Mrs M Reveley, 23 from 70, 32.9%; P Beaumont, 7 from 32, 21.9%.

JOCKEYS: P Niven, 23 winners from 73 rides, 31.5%; W Dowling, 3 from 11, 27.3%; A Maguire, 6 from 23, 26.1%; A Dobbin, 19 from 81, 23.5%; R Guest, 8 from 39, 20.5%; G Lee, 5 from 29, 17.2%.



APRIL 22 1999
RUGBY UNION
WRU and rebel clubs close in on agreement

Racing grieves after the deaths of Tim Forster and Paul Kelleway

Men of character who left their mark

By Alan Lee and Chris McGrath

RACING yesterday mourned two of the richest characters in its modern pageant, Tim Forster and Paul Kelleway, each losing a brave battle with illness within hours of the other. The sorrow that united this diverse sport could hardly embrace the memory of two more different trainers.

Captain Forster, an august, bleakly humorous man, became an icon for steeplechasing's rural constituency with three Grand National winners and a vivid contempt for the poison of urban values. He was 65. Kelleway, seven years his junior, offered an idiosyncratic and dauntless contrast in Newmarket, delighting in routinely pitching his Davids against the Goliaths of Flat racing. Both men had been forced into retirement by deteriorating health, though Forster retained a permit to train a few point-to-pointers and saddled the last of over a thousand winners under Rules on New Year's Day.

If Forster had been free to decide a day to go, it would surely have been when there was racing at Towcester, in driving rain and bottomless mud, just like yesterday. The course observed a minute's silence for one of its most enduring patrons, a man about whom everyone has a story and nobody a sour word.

The memories were of a private, educated man of rigidly conservative tastes, steely dry humour and a hatred of all things modern. Intensely superstitious, incurably pessimistic, old-fashioned to the point of eccentricity, Forster chain-smoked to calm his nerves and detested the hype and expectations that came with a top-class horse.

Forster had been due to run his winning point-to-pointer, Bagalino, at Towcester, recalled by all as his favourite track. Rodney Farrant, one of several jockeys present whose careers began under 'The Captain', said: "He loved it here and he would have considered this proper jumping weather."

Hugo Bevan, clerk of the course at several of Forster's preferred haunts, remembered him as "incredibly shy and very old school". He added: "There was hardly a day at which I have officiated over the last 25 years when he didn't have a runner. I loved his pessimism — nothing was ever good news."

It was Brendan Powell, the senior man in a sombre Towcester weighing-room, who possessed the richest fund of Forsterisms, having first ridden for him in 1981 and retained links ever since.

"I could sit and tell stories about the Captain all day," Powell said. "He kept a daily diary of his training career and I reckon everyone in the sport would love to read it from cover to cover.

"I once rode a novice chaser called Trimage for him, on this course, and in the parade ring he said: 'This horse is just like you — he's Irish and he's thick in the head but if you kick him enough times, he'll respond.' Then he just spun round and walked away.

"He nearly had a fit one day when my mobile phone rang up on his gallops, and he hated jockeys' agents. Last season, Paul Carberry had been booked and the Captain said to me in real horror: 'I hear this man wears red gloves. I can't have someone riding for me in red gloves.'

"We had a really decent horse called Coonawarra who had won five on the bounce and was 4-1 on to make it six at Sandown one day. I saw the Captain with the saddle and asked how he [Forster] was. 'How do you think I am,' he said. 'I'd rather be at Towcester with a 100-1 shot.' He never wanted the pressure, you see, he just loved things to sail along quietly."

Kelleway, a robust soul who loved to defy the odds, was ultimately defeated by the pancreatic cancer that hastened his retirement 18 months ago. He was as resourceful with cheap horses as with his wit, sustaining an uphill battle against more fashionable rivals with unwavering self-belief. He was fond of comparing himself to General Custer, surrounded by the Red Indians of Newmarket — Messrs Cecil, Stoute and Gosden.

His own last stand was rewarded by the success of Dovedon Star, his final runner, at Newmarket in October 1997. But earlier battle honours included seven group winners, most notably Swiss Maid, Madam Gay and Risk Me.

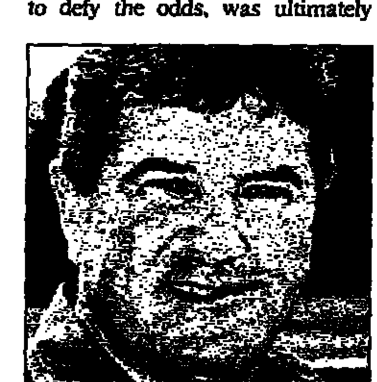
As a jump jockey, Kelleway had scaled the twin peaks of Cheltenham with What A Myth (1969 Cheltenham Gold Cup) and Bula (Champion Hurdle 1971 and 1972).

Ray Cochrane, the Derby winning jockey, said: "He was a tough professional and there were no second measures, but when you got him away from horses, in his social life, he was a bloody good bloke."

Pat Eddery, his weighing-room colleague, added: "He came up with some really good horses over the years. He didn't have the backing and he didn't have the cream, but he had a good eye for a horse and he trained them well. He will be sadly missed."

On his retirement Kelleway sold Shalfleet stables to Jeremy Noseda and retreated to Spain with his wife, Gillian. He is assured of a tangible legacy on the turf, with three children — Gay, Anthony and Sarah — all training. But his memory will endure with the same independence that animated his life.





Forster, left, and Kelleway, who died after long illnesses yesterday

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PRESS ASSOCIATION

Ben Nevis becomes the second of Forster's three National winners

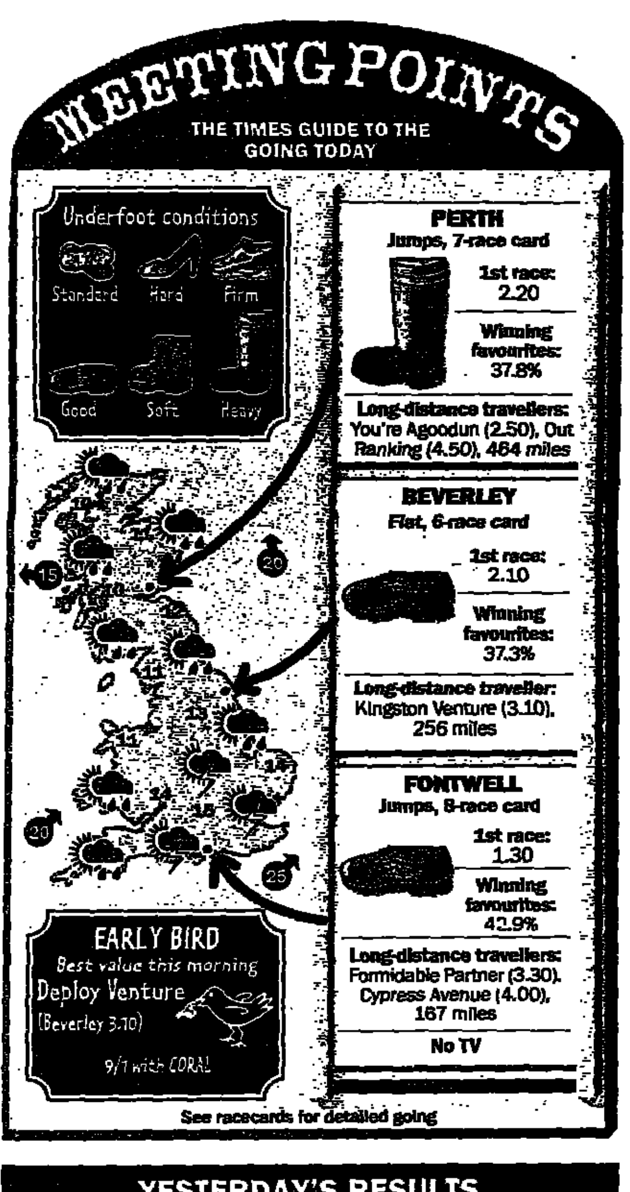
Daliapour makes case for Derby

IT WAS not the strict form of Daliapour's success in the Schroder Unit Trust Blue Riband Trial at Epsom yesterday that prompted William Hill to cut him to 12-1 third favourite (from 14-1) for the Vodafone Derby (Chris McGrath writes). Yet the aplomb with which Daliapour executed this simple assignment on his reappearance offered legitimate grounds for interest in his return here in June.

This low-key start was characteristic of the stealth with which Luca Cumani nurses a colt towards a possible crack at the Derby. Daliapour will improve for his exertions, albeit few were required to preserve the lead he established as the stalls opened.

More significant was the aptitude he showed for the peculiar demands of Epsom. While the son of Sadler's Wells will be well served by the extra two furlongs of the classic, he also showed a slickness on the bridle that will make life easier for his jockey, Gerald Mossé.

Cumani, who first won the race with Kahyasi and added High-Rise last year, was restrained about his prospects of following up. "He's probably asked to do more on the gallops," Cumani said, "but at least he showed that he acts well round here." Kahyasi and High-Rise completed their Derby preparations in the Lingfield Trial, and Daliapour will follow suit.



YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Epsom

Going: soft, good to soft in places

2.05 (6f) 1, **The Fugative** (M Tebbutt, 15-2, **Rob Wright's nap**); 2, Twice As Sharp (10-1); 3, White Emir (8-1). Stylish Ways (5th) 9-2 fav. 15 ran. NR: Alpen Wolf. ¾l, 3l. P Mitchell. Tote £5.30; £1.80, £3.00, £2.10. DF £35.00. CSF £65.99. Tricast £572.54.

2.35 (1m 2f 18yd) 1, **Daliapour** (G Mosse, 8-13 fav, **Timekeeper's top rating**); 2, Lightning Arrow (15-8); 3, Helvetius (20-1). 5 ran. 2½l, 3l. L Cumani. Tote £1.60; £1.10, £1.70. DF £1.10. CSF £1.70.

3.10 (1m 4f 10yd) 1, **Kinnescash** (R Cochrane, 8-1); 2, Montecristo (7-1); 3, Minivet (9-2). Red Ramona 100-30 fav. 11 ran. NR: Random Kindness, White Plains. 1l, ¾l. P Bowen. Tote £9.20; £2.50, £2.40, £2.00. DF £22.80. CSF £56.66. Tricast £256.24.

3.45 (1m 2f 18yd) 1, **Chief Cashier** (A Daly, 6-1, **Early Bird selection at 10-1**); 2, Royal Amaretto (16-1); 3, Kewarra (4-1 fav). 12 ran. NR: Another Time, Shadoof. 2l, 3½l. G Balding. Tote £5.80; £1.80, £4.70, £1.80. DF £174.10. Tote Trifecta £1,489.60. CSF £88.72. Tricast £395.22.

4.15 (1m 114yd) 1, **Kuster** (L Dettori, 4-1); 2, Border Prince (5-2); 3, High Hoyland (9-4 fav). 14 ran. NR: Chai-Yo, Greenstone. 1½l, 4l. L Cumani. Tote £4.70; £1.70, £1.40, £1.40. DF £6.10. CSF £12.24.

4.45 (1m 114yd) 1, **Catdat Seventeen** (Pat Eddery, 8-1, **our Newmarket correspondent's nap**); 2, Peaceful Sarah (7-2 fav); 3, Northern Sun (12-1). 12 ran. NR: Bold Oriental, Feel No Fear, Titan. 2½l, 1l. P D'Arcy. Tote £9.50; £2.40, £1.40, £3.00. DF £23.20. CSF £34.01.

Jackpot: £86,800.70.

Placepot: £38.20. **Quadpot: £14.70.**

5.05 (5f) 1, **Bevelena** (J F Egan, 11-2 jt-fav); 2, Rose's Treasure (20-1); 3, Avondale Girl (14-1); 4, Oriel Star (6-1). Sounds Ace 11-2 jt-fav. 16 ran. NR: Claudius, Thornaby Girl. 2l, hd. P Evans. Tote £5.90; £2.80, £4.00, £3.30, £1.60. DF £78.60. CSF £118.34. Tricast £1,450.65.

Placepot: £85.20.

Quadpot: £19.30.

Towcester

Going: soft

2.10 (2m hdle) 1, **Stamford Hill** (A P McCoy, 3-1 fav); 2, Sabre Butt (10-1); 3, Chadwick Bank (50-1). 17 ran. NR: Rathure. 4l, 1½l. M Pipe. Tote £3.80; £2.30, £2.90, £10.60. DF £44.90. CSF £26.37.

2.40 (2m 6f ch) 1, **The Campdonian** (V Slattery, 11-8 fav); 2, Orphan Spa (11-2); 3, The Lady Scores (7-1). 9 ran. NR: Red River. 3l, 9l. O O'Neill. Tote £2.20; £1.10, £2.40, £1.70. DF £4.40. CSF £7.87.

3.15 (2m 5f hdle) 1, **Foggy** (C Rafter, 20-1); 2, Lime Street Blues (25-1); 3, Brown Seal (10-1). Come On Eirsh (6th) 7-2 fav. 12 ran. NR: Bad Bertrich, Derra Glen, Dunabrattin, Otago Heights, Redgrave Wolf, Royal Ruler. 4l, 9l. J Norton. Tote £30.80; £5.40, £7.90, £2.90. DF £276.90. CSF £389.49. Tricast £4,745.49.

3.45 (3m 1f ch) 1, **Knight of Passion** (Mr M G Miller, 5-1); 2, Avostar (3-1); 3, Lie Detector (20-1). Trade Dispute evens fav. 6 ran. NR: Bagalino, Mill O'The Rags. Dist, 6l. Mrs P Tizzard. Tote £5.80; £2.30, £1.40. DF £8.90. CSF £17.87.

4.20 (2m 110yd ch) 1, **Gale Tol** (Mr P York, 6-4 fav); 2, Jack The Td (14-1); 3, Conti d'Estruval (3-1). 11 ran. NR: Formal Invitation, Hatham Tam, Lord Kilton, Savuti, Super Sharp. 29l, hd. Miss C Elliott. Tote £2.20; £1.20, £2.80, £1.50. DF £10.90. CSF £20.10.

4.50 (2m 6f ch) 1, **Royal Tommy** (J A McCarthy, 1-2 fav); 2, Moonfighter (15-8); 3, Bubbles Galore (33-1). 4 ran. NR: Edstone, Guignol du Cochet, Merry Shot, Take My Side, The Bizzo. 8l, dist. O Sherwood. Tote £1.30. DF £1.50. CSF £1.74.

5.20 (2m hdle) 1, **Dunston Bill** (W Worthington, 7-2 jt-fav); 2, Mershgner (10-1); 3, Summer Flower (4-1). Wild Hadeer (4th) 7-2 jt-fav. 8 ran. NR: Bayyadi, Dumford Bay, Elegant Fan, Hurricane Jane, Inner Light, Merlins Bay, Olabud, Prancing Blade, Sovereign. Sh hd, 1¼l. B Leavy. Tote £4.80; £1.30, £3.40, £1.20. DF £13.40. CSF £32.42. Tricast £130.27.

Placepot: £1,798.30.

Quadpot: £113.90.

Catterick

Going: soft, heavy in places

2.00 (5f 212yd) 1, **Piccolo Cativo** (Angela Hartley, 9-1); 2, Blushing Grenadier (6-1); 3, Bernardo Bellotto (11-2). San Michel 4-1 fav. 14 ran. Hd, 3½l. Mrs G Rees. Tote £13.90; £3.20, £2.10, £3.90. DF £45.70. CSF £58.47.

2.30 (5f) 1, **Foxkey** (W Supple, 2-1); 2, French Mystery (14-1); 3, Schatzi (16-1). Lady Sandrovitch (5th) 15-8 fav. 9 ran. NR: Melodic Heights. 2½l, 2½l. E Alston. Tote £2.70; £1.10, £5.40, £3.30. DF £34.90. CSF £28.60.

3.00 (7f) 1, **Hadeqa** (J F Egan, 5-1); 2, Grizelda (10-1); 3, Three Leaders (25-1); 4, Elsie Bamford (14-1). Guest of Honour 9-4 fav. 16 ran. NR: Pandjojoe, Springs Noblequest. 5l, 1½l. P Evans. Tote £5.40; £1.30, £2.20, £10.70, £2.70. DF £37.90. CSF £48.15. Tricast £1,053.32.

3.30 (1m 3f 214yd) 1, **Aldwych Arrow** (J Carroll, 9-1); 2, Aspirant Dancer (9-2); 3, Crystal Falls (10-1). Ardleigh Charmer 9-4 fav. 12 ran. Sh hd, 6l. M Buckley. Tote £15.60; £2.90, £1.40, £3.90. DF £276.90. CSF £48.37. Tricast £400.64.

4.00 (1m 3f 214yd) 1, **Doonaree** (D Holland, 1-2 fav); 2, Toto Caelo (7-4); 3, Western Command (25-1). 4 ran. 1l, dist. M Johnston. Tote £1.30. DF £1.10. CSF £1.49.

4.35 (7f) 1, **Gunner Sam** (D Holland, 8-13 fav); 2, The Haka (16-1); 3, Mister Mal (7-1). 9 ran. 1l, 6l. Tote £1.60; £1.20, £1.90, £2.00. DF £6.60. CSF £13.03.

Carlisle in doubt

CARLISLE'S meeting tomorrow remains in doubt after a further inspection was called for 7.30 this morning when officials looked at the course yesterday afternoon. "The going is heavy and still not raceable," said clerk of the course Johnny Fenwicke-Clennell.

BEVERLEY

ROB WRIGHT
2.10 Ferny Factors
2.40 Caerosa
3.10 Gypsy (nb)
3.40 Coffee Cream
4.10 Compton Ace
4.40 **TWICKERS** (nap)

Our Newmarket correspondent: 3.10 Deploy Venture. 4.10 **ANGELS VENTURE** (nap). 4.40 Twickers.

Timekeeper's top rating: 3.10 **DEPLOY VENTURE.**

GOING: GOOD TOTE JACKPOT MEETING DRAW: 5F, HIGH BEST SIS

2.10 PANNELL CLAIMING STAKES
(3-Y-O: £2,364: 1m 1f 207yd) (11 runners)

101 (10) 210-80 SUNSET LADY 106 (F,G,S) (Jack Of All Trades) P Haslam 9-2 P Goode (5) [top]
102 (4) 300-0 COOLING CASTLE 3 (Mrs E Lemprière) B Meehan 8-13 Pat Eddery 66
103 (3) 1650-0 FERNY FACTORS 15 (C,S) (B Bruce) Ron Thompson 8-13 L Newton 58
104 (11) 000- MOLLYTIME 171 (G Bemell) N Bycroft 8-4 R Lappin 26
105 (1) 0006-6 TIKOTINO 3 (T Revill) J Glover 8-4 G Duffield 49
106 (5) 100064 ALANA'S CAVALIER 17 (V) (Three R's) R Hollinshead 8-3 K Darley 66
107 (9) 0-0 SOUTHERN DUNES 7 (Don Enrico Incisa) Enrico Incisa 8-3 Kim Tinkler –
108 (7) 05-630 TIME ON MY HANDS 47 (G Reed) C Thornton 8-1 J Fanning 53
109 (2) 50-0 TIP THE BALANCE 8 (Mrs E Comer) J Parkes 7-12 L Charnock 25
110 (8) 0050- PHASE EIGHT GIRL 198 (P Urquhart) J Hetherton 7-10 N Kennedy 45
111 (6) -00000 SILK WING 21 (B) (J Burns) T Clement 7-10 Declan O'Shea 39

BETTING: 7-2 Sunset Lady, 4-1 Ferny Factors, Alana's Cavalier, 7-1 Cooling Castle, Tikotino, 8-1 Time On My Hands, 14-1 Tip The Balance, Silk Wing, 20-1 others.

1998: DANCING RIO 9-5 C Lowther (2-1 fav) P Haslam 10 ran

FORM ANALYSIS
SUNSET LADY failed to take to the sand this winter but can bounce back returned to turf. She was winning for the third time last season when making virtually all to beat Pretty Obvious 1¾l in an Ayr (1m, heavy) nursery last October and had previously proven her stamina over today's trip when second in a large field at Nottingham. As on those occasions, the stable's promising apprentice Paul Goode takes the ride. Cooling Castle showed ability in the first of his three starts last year when finishing just over 6l third of 12 to Indian Plume at Pontefract (6f). Although stoutly bred, he may have found the 1m 3½f trip stretching his stamina when 18l 12th of 19 to Dalby Of York at Windsor on Monday and can not be ruled out. Alana's Cavalier, winner of a seller at Southwell (1m) in January, has place claims on his 9l fourth of eight to Luz Bay in a similar event at Warwick (1m 4½f) 17 days ago, likewise Tikotino on her 7l sixth of 17 to Angie Marinie in a Nottingham (1m) seller.

2.40 HAPPY BIRTHDAY DANA FILLIES HANDICAP
(£3,129: 1m 1f 207yd) (19 runners)

201 (13) 15045- IMANI 217 (D,F) (R Khan) J Dunlop 4-10-0 Pat Eddery 83
202 (8) 75040- CHASETOWN CAILIN 255 (Don Enrico Incisa) Enrico Incisa 4-9-8 Kim Tinkler 53
203 (18) 3050-5 MAY QUEEN MEGAN 14 (F,S) (S Harrison) Mrs A King 6-9-5 A Daly (3) 65
204 (14) 04-000 FORMER LOVE 14 (Mrs D Andrews) T Donnelly 4-9-3 C Rutter 71
205 (12) 0000-5 CAEROSA 15 (Mr & Mrs G Middlebrook) M Johnston 4-9-2 D Holland 60
206 (6) -23320 MISS ALL ALONE 28 (Countrywide Classics Ltd) J Glover 4-8-13 G Duffield 73
207 (2) 500-00 STARLINER 76 (Northgate Lodgers) M Brittain 4-8-12 D Mernagh (5) 68
208 (19) 0000-0 DISCRETION 15 (D Mager & S Mager) S Gollings M Reveley 5-8-12 A Culhane 67
210 (5) 00-050 TYCOON TINA 12 (CD) (A Brooke Rankin) W Brisbourne 5-8-12 A McCarthy (3) 77
211 (17) 00006- SONEVA 199 (C Buckley) M A Buckley 4-8-10 K Fallon 39
212 (15) -33053 BUNNIES OWN 17 (J Starbuck) J L Harris 4-8-8 Iona Wands (5) 61
213 (16) 40-040 SNOWY MANTLE 66 (F) (Mrs G Fane) J Bethell 6-8-7 F Lynch 64
214 (9) -56004 PORTITE SOPHIE 15 (S) (Ms M Hanlon) M Brittain 8-8-6 K Darley 70
215 (11) 26005- MAZILLA 250J (D,F,G) (M Rhodes) A Streeter 7-8-5 T Sprake 65
216 (10) 0600-1 PICCADILLY 15 (F) (S Ward) Miss K Milligan 4-8-5 G Carter [top]
217 (7) 400-00 CAMPARI 12 (M Hyman) Mrs A Naughton 4-8-5 F Norton 56
218 (3) 0-0100 THE BARNSLEY BELLE 66 (K Meynell) G Woodward 6-8-4 R Lappin 61
219 (1) 0300-0 MY FLOOSIE 17 (A Eaton) B Leavy 4-8-2 N Carlisle 68

BETTING: 4-1 Imani, 6-1 Caerosa, 7-1 Bunnies Own, 8-1 The Barnsley Belle, 10-1 May Queen Megan, 12-1 others.

1998: TYCOON TINA 4-9-1 A McCarthy (13-2) W Brisbourne 15 ran

FORM ANALYSIS
IMANI, trained by Geoff Lewis when beating Jungle Story 4l at Newbury (1m 2f) off a 4lb lower mark last July, has strong claims on her debut for John Dunlop against a field of plating-class rivals. Although unable to add to her summer victory last year, the daughter of Danehill held her form well and was anything but disgraced when signing off with a 5½l fifth of 15 to La Tiziana at Newbury (1m 2f). Piccadilly, another to switch stables this winter, made a pleasing start for new connections when beating Dr Woodstock 1½l in a 19-runner Ripon (1m 4f) selling handicap 15 days ago. A 3lb higher mark appears fair but the form is of questionable value and Caerosa, around 6l fifth of 20 to Christiansted at Ripon (1m 4f) earlier this month, may prove a bigger threat. The Barnsley Belle is a pound higher in the handicap than when winning on the all-weather at Southwell (1m) in February but has been off the course for two months since a disappointing last run.

READING THE RACECARD

103 (12) 0-0432 GOOD TIMES 74 (CD,BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 9-10-0 B West (4) 88

Racecard number. Draw in brackets. Six-figure form (F - fell. P - pulled up. U - unseated rider. B - brought down. S - slipped up. R - refused. D - disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing; J if jumps. (B - blinkers. V - visor. T - tongue strap. H - hood. E - Eyeshield. C - course winner. D - distance winner. CD course and distance winner. BF - beaten favourite in most recent race). Going on which horse has won (F - firm, good to firm, hard. G - good. S - soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight to be carried. Rider plus any allowance. Timekeeper's speed rating

3.10 C.N. WILMOT-SMITH RETIREMENT (SHOWCASE HANDICAP)
(3-Y-O: £4,049: 1m 1f 207yd) (15 runners)

301 (2) 2314-2 DEPLOY VENTURE 19 (Dr F Chao) S Woods 9-7 N Callan (5) [top]
302 (5) 350-1 PEKAN HEIGHTS 17 (D,S) (H R H Sultan Ahmad Shah) E Dunlop 9-6 W Ryan 69
303 (6) 03-5 LOOP THE LOUP 21 (D Stell) J Dunlop 9-3 Pat Eddery 68
304 (8) 4166-1 KINGSTON VENTURE 28 (D,F,S) (Miss C Overton) W G M Turner 9-3 T Sprake 63
305 (11) 3622-4 NATHAN'S BOY 28 (Mrs J Hughes) R Hollinshead 8-12 P M Quinn (7) 81
306 (10) 3054-2 JUSTUPYOURSTREET 7 (E Brook) J J O'Neill 8-12 G Duffield 69
307 (15) 23260- HIGH REGARD 231 (BF) (Sheikh Mohammed) M Johnston 8-12 D Holland 57
308 (1) 22610- EDMO HEIGHTS 186 (C,F) (Edmolift UK Ltd) T Easterby 8-9 K Fallon 69
309 (3) 0046-4 SEGAVIEW 14 (Thorney Racing Club) Mrs P Sly 8-7 A Culhane 51
310 (13) 41056- GYPSY 184 (F) (R Flatt) M Tompkins 8-2 S Drowne 72
311 (9) 3550-4 ENFILADE 22 (H Channon) B Hanbury 8-2 R Winston (3) 79
312 (14) 300-04 BUTTERSCOTCH 8 (Sunpak Potatoes 2) J Eyre 8-0 A Mackay 70
313 (7) 6050- MASTER TIROL 211 (D Read) R Fahey 7-13 J Quinn 66
314 (12) 06130- TIME TO WYN 185 (C,F) (M Ng) J FitzGerald 7-12 P Fessey 79
315 (4) 3000- WAY BACK 232 (Mrs G Spink) B Rothwell 7-11 D Mernagh (5) 63

BETTING: 5-1 Pekan Heights, 11-2 Justupyourstreet, 8-1 Loop The Loup, Kingston Venture, 9-1 Deploy Venture, 10-1 Enfilade, High Regard, Nathan's Boy, 12-1 Butterscotch, Edmo Heights, 14-1 Gypsy, Segaview, 20-1 Master Tirol, Time To Win, 33-1 Way Back

1998: TENSILE 9-2 R Ffrench (8-1) L Cumani 13 ran

FORM ANALYSIS
Mark Tompkins has made a fast start to the season and could have a leading say here with GYPSY. The son of Distinctly North found life tough in handicaps after winning a maiden auction event at Yarmouth (7f) last July but has fallen from an opening mark of 74 to 65 today. Although his sire was a sprinter the selection is related to a middle-distance winner abroad and stayed a mile well enough at two-years. Deploy Venture is just one of many dangers. He was unfortunate to catch an unexposed rival when beaten 1½l by Tactful Remark at Kempton (1m 1f) on his reappearance and is just a pound higher in the weights here. Pekan Heights and Kingston Venture have both been raised 6lb for their reappearance victories, the former beating Beryl 3l at Nottingham (1m 2f), and Kingston Venture kicking clear over 3f out to beat Romero 1½l at Doncaster (1m 2f). Their claims are solid, as are those of Justupyourstreet, a ½l second of 13 to Prairie Wolf at Ripon (1m) on his return to action a week ago. Loop The Loup appears one of his stable's lesser lights but remains open to further improvement and starts his handicap career off a realistic mark.

3.40 WILLIAM HILL RATED HANDICAP
(3-Y-O: £6,090: 7f 100yd) (5 runners)

401 (4) 341-01 RIVER TIMES 8 (CD,F) (Times of Wigan) T Easterby 9-10 (3ex) K Darley 83
402 (1) 510- COFFEE CREAM 201 (D,G) (Lord Portman) B Meehan 9-5 Pat Eddery 61
403 (3) 04251- SPY 246 (D,G) (G Read) C Thornton 8-13 Dean McKeown 94
404 (2) 10502- THE HAULIER 177 (D,G) (T E F Freight Ltd) T Easterby 8-11 K Fallon 80
405 (5) 22312 FORTY FORTE 3 (G) (N Shields) K Burke 8-7 N Callan (5) [top]

Long handicap: Forty Forte 8-6.

BETTING: 2-1 River Times, 9-4 Forty Forte, 9-2 Coffee Cream, 5-1 Spy, 7-1 The Haulier.

1998: FIZZED 9-4 D Holland (9-1) M Johnston 13 ran

FORM ANALYSIS
Forty Forte, emphatic 15l winner of a seller in soft ground at Nottingham last month, ran well in defeat behind The Whistling Teal at Windsor (1m), on much faster ground, last Monday. He will be a popular choice to go one better, particularly if the going eases further. River Times ran moderately on his return (first attempt on soft ground) but bounced back, in a minor event, on a sound surface over course and distance last week. This looks a bit tougher, though, and COFFEE CREAM can prove the pick. She confirmed the promise of her debut when losing her maiden tag in decisive fashion at Kempton (7f) in September, and her subsequent running in a listed contest at Newmarket the following month (finished last of ten to Smittenby) is best ignored as she refused to settle in a race run at a crawl. She has scope and, while lacking a recent run, does not look too harshly treated on her handicap bow. The Haulier, winner of a nursery at Newcastle in August but 3lb higher than when beaten at Redcar (6f) on his final start, is more exposed than the selection, while Spy has been off the course since winning an ordinary maiden race at Musselburgh in August.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Fontwell Park: 5.00 Just A Tad, Measureless.

4.10 MOORTOWN MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES
(3-Y-O: £2,804: 1m 3f 216yd) (8 runners)

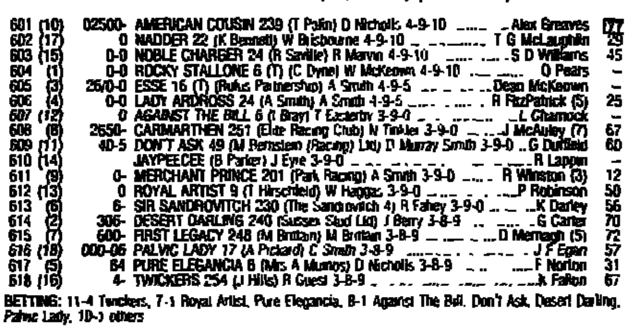
501 (8) 4-3 ANGELS VENTURE 15 (BF) (Dr F Chao) S Woods 9-0 Dane O'Neill [top]
502 (4) 004- COMPTON ACE 206 (E Penser) G A Butler 9-0 L Dettori 56
503 (5) 3- DOUBLE BAILEYS 209 (Double Baileys Partnership) M Johnston 9-0 D Holland 35
504 (6) 6 PANCAKE WOOD 17 (Greenland Park Ltd) M Johnston 9-0 J Carroll –
505 (3) 62344- HIGHLY FANCIED 192 (Mrs A Bell) S Kettlewell 8-9 M Fenton 62
506 (7) 06-2 NIKA NESGODA 10 (C Humphris) J Dunlop 8-9 Pat Eddery 54
507 (1) 05600- RAINBOW RAVER 171 (A Needham) C Smith 8-9 J F Egan 42
508 (2) SHAMSAT MTOTO (Sheikh A al-Maktoum) M Jarvis 8-9 P Robinson –

BETTING: 11-8 Nika Nesgoda, 4-1 Angels Venture, 11-2 Double Baileys, 6-1 Shamsat Mtoto, 8-1 Compton Ace, 10-1 Highly Fancied, 25-1 Pancake Wood, 33-1 Rainbow Raver.

1998: SEIGNORIAL 9-0 J Reid (9-4) P Chapple-Hyam 4 ran

FORM ANALYSIS
Two Derby entries — Angels Venture and Compton Ace — put their credentials on the line here but they might be upstaged by NIKA NESGODA. John Dunlop's filly ran highly encouragingly on her return when, despite being weak in the market, she ran Maiden's Blush (trained by John Gosden and an Oaks possible) to a head at Windsor (1m 2f) last week. The way that Nika Nesgoda kept on that day suggests this longer trip will hold no terrors and, given her round action, any cut underfoot is unlikely to trouble her. There is plenty of stamina in Compton Ace's pedigree and so it was little wonder that he did not show much ability until unleashed over 10 furlongs at Bath (around 4l 4th to Bergamo) on his final start of last term. This longer journey is sure to suit him even better. Angels Venture shaped with so much promise on his debut at Newmarket last term that he was odds on to open his account at Ripon (1m) this month, but he looked short of speed and could finish only third to Tier Worker (beaten 3l). He promises to stay this trip but his lack of pace may again be exploited. Mark Johnston runs Double Baileys, very green when third to Eileen Shona at Redcar in September, as well as Pancake Wood, never dangerous on his debut at Newcastle. Shamsat Mtoto, a half-sister to a winner in Germany, is worth noting in the market.

4.40 FULFORD MAIDEN STAKES (£4,101: 5f) (18 runners)



601 (10) 02500- AMERICAN COUSIN 239 (T Palin) D Nicholls 4-9-10 Alex Greaves [top]
602 (17) 0 NADDER 22 (K Bennett) W Brisbourne 4-9-10 T G McLaughlin 29
603 (15) 0-0 NOBLE CHARGER 24 (R Saville) R Marvin 4-9-10 S D Williams 45
604 (1) 0-0 ROCKY STALLONE 6 (T) (C Dyne) W McKeown 4-9-10 O Pears –
605 (3) 26/0-0 ESSE 16 (T) (Rufus Partnership) A Smith 4-9-5 Dean McKeown –
606 (4) 0-0 LADY ARDROSS 24 (A Smith) A Smith 4-9-5 R FitzPatrick (5) 25
607 (12) 0 AGAINST THE BILL 6 (I Bray) T Easterby 3-9-0 L Charnock –
608 (8) 2650- CARMARTHEN 251 (Elite Racing Club) N Tinkler 3-9-0 J McAuley (7) 67
609 (11) 40-5 DON'T ASK 49 (M Bernstein (Racing) Ltd) D Murray Smith 3-9-0 G Duffield 60
610 (14) JAYPEECEE (B Parker) J Eyre 3-9-0 R Lappin –
611 (9) 0- MERCHANT PRINCE 201 (Park Racing) A Smith 3-9-0 R Winston (3) 12
612 (13) 0 ROYAL ARTIST 9 (T Hirschfeld) W Haggas 3-9-0 P Robinson 50
613 (6) 6- SIR SANDROVITCH 230 (The Sandrovitch 4) R Fahey 3-9-0 K Darley 56
614 (2) 306- DESERT DARLING 240 (Sussex Stud Ltd) J Berry 3-8-9 G Carter 70
615 (7) 600- FIRST LEGACY 248 (M Brittain) M Brittain 3-8-9 D Mernagh (5) 72
616 (18) 000-06 PALVIC LADY 17 (A Pickard) C Smith 3-8-9 J F Egan 57
617 (5) 64 PURE ELEGANCIA 6 (Mrs A Munos) D Nicholls 3-8-9 F Norton 31
618 (16) 4- TWICKERS 254 (J Hills) R Guest 3-8-9 K Fallon 67

BETTING: 11-4 Twickers, 7-1 Royal Artist, Pure Elegancia, 8-1 Against The Bill, Don't Ask, Desert Darling, Palvic Lady, 10-1 others

1998: EASTER OGIL 3-9-0 L Dettori (5-2) I Balding 10 ran

FORM ANALYSIS
TWICKERS has plenty to recommend her in what looks a modest contest. Speedily bred, she made a pleasing debut when keeping on well at the business end of the race to be around 4l fourth, of 14, to Deadly Nightshade at Bath (5f) in August. A reproduction of that effort, in this company, is likely to be good enough and, given that she is favourably drawn with Kieren Fallon booked to ride, there ought to be no excuses. Palvic Lady, dropped in distance, is speedy and drawn to take advantage. She was not entirely disgraced when under 7l sixth to Risky Valentine at Nottingham (6f) last time and may emerge as the biggest danger. Desert Darling went the wrong way last term after an encouraging first start at Lingfield. He could prove troublesome if back on song, but has a low draw to overcome. Pure Elegancia, who had Against The Bill and Rocky Stallone (both held) behind when beaten around 9l at Thirsk last week, should find a race or two before the season is out. Carmarthen, Sir Sandrovitch and Royal Artist have also hinted at ability and make more appeal than American Cousin (yet to win from 11 starts).

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
M Johnston	27	123	22.0	L Dettori	8	34	23.5
E Dunlop	6	28	21.4	W Ryan	10	46	21.7
J Dunlop	10	47	21.3	K Darley	40	196	20.4
Mrs M Reveley	15	81	18.5	T Sprake	3	16	18.8
J Berry	21	121	17.4	K Fallon	26	155	16.8
J FitzGerald	7	43	16.3	Pat Eddery	5	30	16.7
B Hanbury	3	25	12.0	D Holland	12	79	15.2
C Thornton	4	35	11.4	J Carroll	15	118	12.7
R Fahey	6	55	10.9	M Fenton	9	72	12.5
T Easterby	14	131	10.7	J Fanning	5	46	10.9

FONTWELL PARK



ROB WRIGHT
1.30 Medium Wave
2.00 Harik
2.30 Ehtefaal
3.00 Regal Aura
3.30 Yeoman Sailor
4.00 Honey Mount
4.30 Woodlands Beau
5.00 Lord Optimist

GOING: GOOD SIS

1.30 RAPIDE MORTGAGE SERVICES & TWO COUNTIES MAIDEN HURDLE
(Div I: £2,233: 2m 2f 110yd) (16 runners)

1 - CANDLE SMOKE 950F (T) Mrs L Richards 6-11-7 M Richards
2 502 FALLAH 17 Lady Herries 5-11-7 W Greatrex (7)
3 0-60 GREGORIO 26 M Camacho 9-11-7 B Powell
4 354F MEDIUM WAVE 18 (B) S Sherwood 7-11-7 D Gallagher
5 6 NET PROFIT 143 J Gifford 5-11-7 L Aspell
6 244P PLAYLORD 17 S McCourt 6-11-7 E Husband
7 F052 PURPLE ACE 19 H Garslee 7-11-7 D Leahy
8 00/6 SIR PRIZE 101 R Rowe 6-11-7 A Garrity (7)
9 P TARTAN SHOT 84 Miss H Knight 6-11-7 R Farrant
10 ZABRISKIE 13F G L Moore 5-11-7 P Hide
11 GAROTA DE IPANEMA 32F Miss K Marks 5-11-2 V Slattery
12 0006 MAYBE LATER 19 R Curtis 7-11-2 J Leech
13 SABRE DROM M Wilkinson 6-11-2 Mr S Morris (7)
14 P62- STEPPHONIC 346 O Sherwood 6-11-2 J A McCarthy
15 500- TUDOR BLONDE 432 P Purdy 8-11-2 M Sharratt
16 RELIABLY WON 187F D Marks 4-10-9 Edgar Byrne (7)

7-2 Purple Ace, 4-1 Medium Wave, 9-2 Fallah, 6-1 Stepphonic, 7-1 Candle Smoke, 10-1 Gregorio, 14-1 Garota De Ipanema, 16-1 others.

2.00 RAPIDE MORTGAGE SERVICES & TWO COUNTIES MAIDEN HURDLE
(Div II: £2,215: 2m 2f 110yd) (16)

1 2PP ACADEMY HOUSE 101 (T) T D McCarthy 6-11-7 S Durack
2 0- BALLIEBOROUGH BOY 264F D O'Brien 5-11-7 W Marston
3 400 CAMDEN ROAD 29 Miss S Edwards 6-11-7 Mr N Fehily (7)
4 0-P0 ELVIS 64 [illegible] 5-11-7 L Aspell
5 -050 FOLK HERO 26 (G) R Rowe 7-11-7 B Fenton
6 50 GARE HILL 29 J Gifford 5-11-7 O Burrows (5)
7 3 GREAT CRUSADER 103 R Rowe 7-11-7 P Hide
8 3633 HARIK 17 (BF) G L Moore 5-11-7 M Batchelor (5)
9 66-4 ROSS TOWN 34 [illegible] 6-11-7 M Griffiths (5)
10 0P- SON OF GLEN 33C P Hedger 7-11-7 M Richards
11 0/00 CLAN ROSS 66 P Rochens 6-11-2 P Holley
12 350 SOVIET LADY 17 [illegible] 5-11-2 D Gallagher
13 004 THATCHAM ISLAND 19 D Williams 6-11-2 D Griffiths
14 WINGED GREYBIRD 9F (T) Miss A M Newton-Smith 5-11-2 J Goldstein (3)
15 02 TINGED WITH GOLD 17 Miss H Knight 4-11-0 M A Fitzgerald
16 3 BELLE D'ORSINI 13 M Pipe 4-10-9 A P McCoy

11-10 Great Crusader, 7-2 Belle D'Orsini, 7-1 Harik, 10-1 others

2.30 RAPIDE MORTGAGE SERVICES AND FINBAR HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,600: 2m 6f 110yd) (17)

1 3333 AMAZE 17 (BF,F,G) Lady Herries 10-12-0 W Greatrex (7)
2 2100 PROVINCE 17 (S) C Mann 6-11-12 J Magee
3 422- POLO RIDGE 335 (BF,D,G) O Sherwood 7-11-12 J A McCarthy
4 0-F0 TENDER SITUATION 9 R Rowe 8-11-4 D Gallagher
5 3500 PALAEMON 19 (G) G Balding 5-11-1 B Fenton
6 0046 DJAIS 30 (F,G) J Jenkins 10-11-1 A P McCoy
7 0642 EHTEFAAL 17 (F,G) J King 8-10-13 L Cummins (3)
8 24U3 GIVE AND TAKE 17 (S) R Frost 6-10-11 J Frost
9 0-PR ONE WORD 9 (S) D Williams 7-10-11 D Griffiths
10 0304 STRONG MAGIC 48 (T) Miss C Johnsey 7-10-8 R Thornton
11 455U FOX RIDGE 28 Miss S Edwards 7-10-7 L Aspell
12 0001 BANJO HILL 17 (D,G) C Weedon 5-10-4 O Burrows (5)
13 U343 MEMORY'S MUSIC 19 (C,S) M Madgwick 7-10-0 C Murray (7)
14 0PP0 SIR GALEFORCE 15 (G) R Curtis 9-10-0 J Goldstein (3)
15 00-U MAGGIE STRAIT 17 (F) Mrs A King 7-10-0 J R Kavanagh
16 0U05 ADILOV 19 (C,F,S) J Bridger 7-10-0 Sophie Mitchell
17 4-00 SIPWA 34 D O'Brien 5-10-0 M Batchelor (5)

4-1 Polo Ridge, 5-1 Amaze, 7-1 Palaemon, 8-1 Province, Ehtefaal, Banjo Hill, 12-1 Tender Situation, Give And Take, Strong Magic, Djais, 14-1 Fox Ridge, 16-1 others.

3.00 GEORGE GALE & CO HANDICAP CHASE
(£2,900: 2m 2f) (14)

1 4P4P SIERRA BAY 28 (F,S) O Sherwood 9-11-11 J A McCarthy
2 5023 JAZZY REFRAIN 26 (F,G,S) L Wells 9-11-2 L Aspell
3 4030 TWIN FALLS 33 (C,F,G,S) P Hobbs 8-10-13 Mr P Flynn (7)
4 -P14 REGAL AURA 38 (BF,F,G,S) D O'Brien 9-10-10 W Marston
5 -305 AEDEAN 19 (C,F,S) G Enright 10-10-6 R Thornton
6 U454 PARLIAMENTARIAN 19 (B,CD,F,G,S) T Casey 10-10-5 D Gallagher
7 2404 QUANGO 17 (B,G,S) C Mann 7-10-3 Mr N Fehily (7)
8 5412 DR ROCKET 231 (C,F,G,S) R Dickin 14-10-0 X Aizpuru (3)
9 4P0P JHAL FREZI 19 (F) A Barrow 11-10-0 A Bates (3)
10 -1PU KYBO'S REVENGE 19 (C,S) R Rowe 8-10-0 B Fenton
11 /F-2 NECTANEBO 17 (F) B Ryall 11-10-0 J Tizzard
12 1564 CIPRIANI QUEEN 38 (CD,F,G,S) J Gifford 9-10-0 P Hide
13 234U JASON'S BOY 19 (B,F,G,S) J Bradley 9-10-0 R Johnson
14 U02U SMART GUY 17 Mrs L Jewell 7-10-0 T Peoples (7)

7-2 Jazzy Refrain, 7-1 Regal Aura, Nectanebo, 8-1 Sierra Bay, Dr Rocket, 10-1 Twin Falls, Aedean, Quango, Jason's Boy, 14-1 Parliamentarian, Cipriani Queen, 16-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: R J Smith, 3 winners from 3 runners, 100%; I Williams, 4 from 7, 57.1%; Miss V Williams, 11 from 27, 40.7%; J King, 3 from 11, 27.3%; M Pipe, 27 from 107, 25.2%; P Rochens, 6 from 25, 24.0%; P Hobbs, 13 from 56, 23.6%; G McCourt, 3 from 14, 21.4%; R Dickin, 7 from 34, 20.6%; D Williams, 5 from 25, 20.0%.

JOCKEYS: X Aizpuru, 4 winners from 11 rides, 36.4%; A McCoy, 39 from 151, 25.8%; D Gallagher, 15 from 63, 23.8%; P Hide, 23 from 128, 18.0%; C Maude, 8 from 46, 17.4%; M Fitzgerald, 11 from 72, 15.3%; J Goldstein, 4 from 31, 12.9%; L Cummins, 3 from 24, 12.5%; B Powell, 15 from 122, 12.3%. Only qualifiers.

3.30 STREBEL BOILERS AND RADIATORS NOVICES HURDLE (£3,030: 2m 6f 110yd) (14)

1 4341 MERRY PATH 27 (F) O Sherwood 5-11-7 J A McCarthy
2 6123 YEOMAN SAILOR 47 (D,S) Mrs J Pitman 5-11-7 M A Fitzgerald
3 00 CALFSTOWN LORD 26 Miss H Day 7-11-1 S Durack
4 44PP CHECK THE DECK 111 C Mann 8-11-1 J Magee
5 04P5 FORMIDABLE PARTNER 16 Mrs V Ward 6-11-1 R Thornton
6 00 LIGHT REFLECTIONS 41 P Murphy 6-11-1 L Aspell
7 0-00 MR FITZ 30 Mrs A Perrett 6-11-1 P Holley
8 OCKI G L Moore 6-11-1 M Batchelor (5)
9 0-60 PANACEA 135 N Twiston-Davies 6-11-1 T Jenks
10 3-F0 SHARP DEED 14 M Madgwick 5-11-1 J Goldstein (3)
11 5-00 SOUTHDOWN LAD 55 R Rowe 5-11-1 B Fenton
12 P STORMHILL SOLDIER 19P Miss K George 6-11-1 R Massey
13 PP/0 SWISS TACTIC 143 A Jessop 10-11-1 G Tormey
14 2060 FLYING FOOTSIE 17 (S) M J Roberts 6-10-10 T Peoples (7)

11-10 Yeoman Sailor, 7-4 Merry Path, 14-1 Southdown Lad, Flying Footsie, 16-1 Formidable Partner, Ocki, 20-1 Sharp Deed, 33-1 others.

4.00 RAPIDE MORTGAGES ELITE CARE HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,495: 3m 3f) (14)

1 6246 LEAD VOCALIST 41 (F,G,S) R Rowe 10-11-12 B Fenton
2 231P NAZZARO 19 (B,S) W G M Turner 10-11-5 J Power (7)
3 2023 HONEY MOUNT 22 (CD,F) R Alner 8-11-4 A Thornton
4 P404 PALOSANTO 19 (V,D,F,G,S) M Pipe 9-11-4 R Greene
5 5250 CYPRESS AVENUE 26 (F,G) Mrs V Ward 7-11-2 R Thornton
6 3518 ROYAL PIPER 9 (F,S) A J Wilson 12-11-0 B Powell
7 P-P0 APACHEE FLOWER 63 (D,F,G,S) H Howe 9-10-8 M A Fitzgerald
8 -P04 SALAMAN 19F (F) D O'Brien 7-10-7 A P McCoy
9 2214 BLUE BLAZER 17 (S) R Frost 9-10-7 J Frost
10 56P5 DERRA GLEN 19 N Twiston-Davies 5-10-7 C Maude
11 4450 FOUNTAIN BID 17 (C,G) R Dean 7-10-6 Mr N Fehily (7)
12 FUP4 NORTHERN VILLAGE 14 (C,F) L A Dace 12-10-4 G Allen (7)
13 -5PP WHISTLING RUFUS 30 N Twiston-Davies 7-10-2 J Goldstein (3)
14 2URU CHEEKY CHARLIE 33 (G) R Hoad 7-10-0 J R Kavanagh

7-2 Salaman, 9-2 Honey Mount, 6-1 Royal Piper, 7-1 Cypress Avenue, 8-1 Palosanto, Blue Blazer, 12-1 Lead Vocalist, 14-1 others

4.30 RAPIDE MORTGAGE SERVICES AND CORNHILL LIFE NOVICES CHASE
(£2,868: 3m 2f 110yd) (10)

1 3P12 CHEROKEE BOY 17 (CD,F,G,S) B Ryall 7-11-8 J Tizzard
2 0U22 WOODLANDS BEAU 34 (F,G,S) R Alner 7-11-8 A Thornton
3 1306 VIA DEL QUATRO 19 (V,CD,G) J Mullins 7-11-3 R Johnson
4 0PU5 BLOWN WIND 15 (F) O Sherwood 8-11-2 J A McCarthy
5 /50P CEANNAIRE 104 (G) P Winkworth 9-11-2 P Hide
6 4F3P CLAYMORE LAD 22 J King 9-11-2 L Cummins (3)
7 6P/P LURRIGA GLITTER 9 R J Smith 11-11-2 D Gallagher
8 P3P0 AMBER RING 15 Miss K George 6-10-11 R Massey
9 00/F HEIDIQUEENOFCLUBS 51 N Twiston-Davies 8-10-11 J Goldstein (3)
10 PP34 STRATTON FLYER 17 H Howe 9-10-11 R Widger (5)

5-4 Woodlands Beau, 7-2 Cherokee Boy, 9-2 Blown Wind, 8-1 Via Del Quatro, 16-1 Claymore Lad, Lurriga Glitter, 20-1 Stratton Flyer, 25-1 others

5.00 LAMBOURN STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT (£1,567: 2m 2f 110yd) (18)

1 621 TOM COBBLER 19 (S) N Twiston-Davies 5-11-11 J Goldstein (3)
2 21 LINIYAN 38 (S) Miss V Williams 4-11-5 A P McCoy
3 0 CROSSY 22 C Weedon 5-11-4 O Burrows (5)
4 DEALER'S CHOICE O Sherwood 5-11-4 D Leahy
5 ELUSIVE BLADE M J Roberts 5-11-4 T Peoples (7)
6 0 JUST A TAD 17 (B) T D McCarthy 6-11-4 R Thornton
7 LORD OPTIMIST Mrs J Pitman 6-11-4 S Light (7)
8 NAUNTON DOWNS R J Smith 5-11-4 J Mogford (7)
9 6 RIVER GOLD 61 J Gifford 5-11-4 P Hide
10 0 TIME STOOD STILL 34 Mrs J Ewer 6-11-4 J R Kavanagh
11 455U FOX RIDGE 28 Miss S Edwards 7-10-7 L Aspell
12 0001 BANJO HILL 17 (D,G) C Weedon 5-10-4 O Burrows (5)
13 0 EXOTIC PROFILES 29 Miss K George 5-10-13 R Massey
14 FLYING BYE J King 6-10-13 L Cummins (3)
15 6 KITTENKAT 19 N Mitchell 5-10-13 Sophie Mitchell
16 0 MEASURELESS 29 (B,T) J Portman 4-10-12 Mr N Fehily (7)
17 4 RAY SOURCE 28 I Williams 4-10-12 G Tormey
18 6 UN JOUR A VASSY 28 O Sherwood 4-10-12 J A McCarthy

11-8 Liniyan, 3-1 Tom Cobbler, 11-2 Lord Optimist, 13-2 Dealer's Choice, 14-1 River Gold, 16-1 Flying Bye, 20-1 Ray Source, 25-1 Crossy, Kittenkat, 33-1 others.

Perth inspect again

PERTH is hopeful that today's meeting will go ahead after the course passed an inspection yesterday lunchtime. A further inspection will be held at 7.15 this morning. Yesterday's meeting was called off because of waterlogging. Clerk of the course Sam Morshead said: "We are hopeful, but it's a nasty forecast."

FOOTBALL

Chelsea seeking final vindication

FROM KEVIN McCARRA IN PALMA

THE season does not end on a single day. In their minds, at least, clubs take their leave of it at different moments and in a variety of moods. This evening, Chelsea attempt to postpone the conclusion of their own tale. Having already drawn 1-1 at Stamford Bridge, their defence of the Cup Winners' Cup could come to a halt against Real Mallorca at the semi-final stage.

The challenge is to resist acquiescence when the insidious feeling could so easily steal over them that all their efforts are to be denied reward. The gradual subsidence of their bid for the FA Carling Premiership saw them concede two late goals to Leicester City and so share the points on Sunday. "Manchester United are not the best team in the country," Frank Leboeuf, the centre back, said, "but they will win the championship."

Conflicting emotions were present in that sentence. The implied pride in Chelsea rubbed shoulders with dejection. That same ambivalence eddied around the statement of Gianluca Vialli, the player-manager. "I do not think you are successful only if you get silverware," he said. "This has been a positive, exciting season. We are reasonably happy about our performances and results, but there are things to improve."

It was as if a verdict had already been delivered, but, in reality, the closing arguments are still to be heard. The match this evening could find in favour of Chelsea and in terms of talent there are no grounds for fatalism. In the past two seasons, Chelsea have scored in each of their away matches in the competition and to open the scoring would be a thunderous blow to a Mallorca team whose self-belief derives from effective defending. "We are good enough to look at the match with confidence," Vialli said.

It is up to Chelsea to give a performance in which that conviction is fleshed out. The flesh, however, could be the problem. Hector Cuper, the Mallorca coach, keeps the grass long and the diameters of the pitch to a minimum at the Luis Sitjar stadium. His purpose is to create a congested, exhausting arena. "Nobody beats us at running," Vicente Engonga, his midfield player, said.

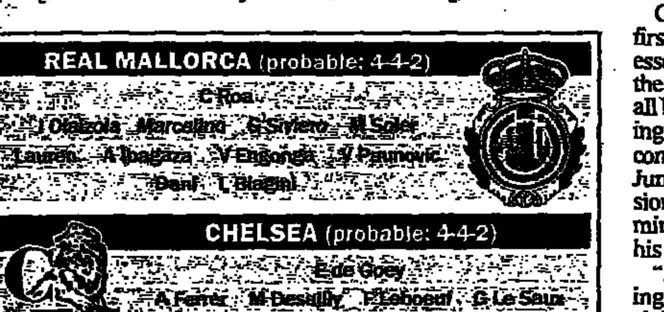
Few members of the Chelsea squad are inclined to boast of their condition, least of all Leboeuf, who spent most of last summer with the France squad that won the World Cup. The programme is taking its toll and he has complained to the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) and the FA. "It's impossible to expect a player to take part in 50 games a season," he said.

"Against Leicester, I was ashamed that in the last 20 minutes I couldn't run. People in the stands had paid a lot of money, but I couldn't give everything. It wasn't all my fault. The PFA say they will try to help, but it's about money and television want more and more games. My body is getting fed-up with football."

His limbs have to be coaxed into action tonight, when the thwarting of Dani, who scored Mallorca's goal a fortnight ago, will be a key objective. Chelsea also need to be more direct in attack if they are to shake off a staidness that sometimes handicaps them.

Given the position after the first leg, adventurousness is essential if they are to reach the final at Villa Park and, in all likelihood, meet Lazio. Having agreed a new three-year contract, which he will sign in June, Leboeuf was full of passion for Chelsea and wished to minimise the controversy over his financial demands.

"I got letters from fans saying that I was burgling the club," he said. "How can they say that when they see me giving my body and my heart for the club? I would give my life for Chelsea." A fierce match with Mallorca will call for sacrifices, but not, one trusts, on quite that scale.



Newcastle lack basic essentials

Newcastle United 0
Coventry City......................4

BY GEORGE CAULKIN



THERE is a general consensus when it comes to construction, whether the edifice in question be a building or a football club, that it is usually wise to begin with the foundations. The single most damning feature of Newcastle United's re-emergence this decade is that the reverse is the case.

Even though this lopsided semi-final, first leg of The Times FA Youth Cup hardly provides the most convincing evidence, there are, finally, positive signs of progression. Jamie McClen and David Beharall have both made the transition from youth to first team recently.

Potentially, more could follow. Steve Caldwell, like Beharall a central defender, was one of the better players on view at St James' Park yesterday, until a rudimentary challenge on the outstanding Coventry City forward, Gary McSheffrey — the scorer of a graceful hat-trick — brought his participation to a premature end. It has, however, all but ensured a serene progression to the final for Coventry, where West Ham United — who defeated the holders, Everton, 3-0 on Tuesday night — probably await.

Craig Strachan, a carrot-topped replica of his father, Gordon, the Coventry manager, added a fourth goal in injury time. In every sense, Newcastle are playing catch-up.

NEWCASTLE UNITED (3-4-3): I Merin — M Harris, S Caldwell, G Caldwell — D Cunningham, B Kerr, S Green (sub: G Hogg, 54min) — J Coppinger, D McMahon, A Walker

COVENTRY CITY (4-4-2): A Mehmet — R Betts, T Cudworth, M Burrows, D Hall — M Lewis (sub: B Ford, 66min), D Doyle (sub: N Thompson, 46min), C Pead (sub: C Strachan, 57min), S McPhee — G McSheffrey, C Enbenne.

Referee: M G Cowburn



Rusedski prepares to deliver one of his service missiles in Monte Carlo yesterday, but they held no terrors for Novak

Rusedski's abject form makes for an Open and shut case

TENNIS

From Alix Ramsay
Tennis Correspondent
in Monte Carlo

DESPITE the history, despite the money, everything is not quite what it seems at the Monte Carlo Country Club. For a start, the club is not actually in Monte Carlo, but just over the border in France. Strapped for acreage, the principality rents the land from its neighbours to provide room for a posh club to stage tennis tournaments. It does the same for the Monte Carlo Golf Club and, as for the Monte Carlo Beach resort, it is on French land, too. Even Karl Lagerfeld's imposing residence, overlooking the tennis courts and the Mediterranean, is on permanent lease from the authorities and is, in effect, a very flash council house.

Greg Rusedski, too, was not quite what he seemed as he took to the courts for the first time. On a grey day of rain delays and constant drizzle, the No 8 seed was kept waiting until late afternoon to begin his second-round match with Jiri Novak and then played like a complete beginner to lose 6-2, 6-2 to the world No 62. At least the match was quick, lasting a mere 56 minutes, but it was the only speedy thing around on a distinctly sluggish day. The clay courts, which are slow on a bright day, had almost ground to a halt in the damp conditions and Rusedski knew that his number was up from the beginning.

The crowd, such as it was, was not exactly enthralled, either. An endless stream of young children headed for the exit, while the man with the pipe appeared to be smoking a small bonfire. The smoke may have obscured his view, but at least the fire kept him warm. Still, those who stayed were on Rusedski's side, mainly because they had not heard of Novak.

Coming through the qualifying competition, Novak already had a few matches under his belt and was more than accustomed to the conditions. He is a tall, clean-cut sort of chap with pink cheeks and neat shorts and the only point worth noting is that his legs do not match, the right being considerably thinner than the left. As for his tennis, all he had to do was keep the ball in play and wait for Rusedski to come to grief, which he did with stunning regularity.

Not that Rusedski imagined that it would be any different. "If anyone puts money on me to win the French Open, they should be shot," he said, looking remarkably cheerful. "But what do I have to lose? These are the weeks where I am not expected to win and I might as well give them a chance.

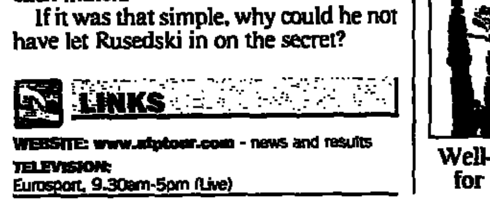
"At least I go out there and give it an effort. I embarrass myself on some occasions, I look good on others. I can't get any worse, but I think I can get better." With that, he was off, safe in the knowledge that another week of his clay-court sentence had been crossed off the calendar.

Yevgeny Kafelnikov has been going through his own form of purgatory over the past few weeks. Since he came within touching distance of the No 1 ranking, he has been falling apart at the seams. Yesterday was one of his more startling performances, losing to the little-known but often mispronounced Ivan Ljubicic, from Croatia, 6-1, 6-2.

At least one seed lived up to his billing. Mark Philippoussis, the No 5 seed, came through 7-6, 6-4 against Ramon Delgado, of Paraguay. Not one of the game's greatest thinkers, his answer to the vagaries of clay-court tennis was simple.

"All I want for myself is each match I go into, I want to, you know, give a hundred per cent commitment of myself out there and just try as hard as I can for each match."

If it was that simple, why could he not have let Rusedski in on the secret?



WEBSITE: www.atptour.com - news and results
TELEVISION:
Eurosport, 9.30am-5pm (Live)

GOLF

Olazabal given a vintage welcome

FROM MEL WEBB IN BARCELONA

NO, he said, he had not had time to indulge in a full-scale, flat-out surrender into the arms of Bacchus yet, but when he did, the local off-licence could expect an order for a bottle of the very finest Spanish wine — red, of course. José María Olazábal returned to his people yesterday and they gave him a Master's welcome.

Olazábal had just played in the pro-am on the eve of the Peugeot Spanish Open, which starts today at El Prat, and had been hailed as a conquering hero. Now he was reflecting on his second victory in the Masters; ten days on, he admitted that he was still enjoying his moment of triumph at Augusta. He had even received a message from King Juan Carlos and there had been telegrams and faxes from the world and his wife.

The pain that Olazábal suffered in his feet three years ago is firmly in the past, but he could not help but think back to those dreadful times when he feared he might not be able to walk again.

"This was a very special victory for me, because of what I'd been through, but also because I proved I still have the game to be a force in the world of golf," he said.

Now he knew, too, how sporting Spain regarded him. "I have not had much time to myself," he said. "It's going to be difficult focusing for the next few weeks, but it is a price we are prepared to pay." For all those reasons Olazábal will have his work cut out this week. Nick Faldo will be trying to jump-start his Ryder Cup campaign. Bernhard Langer is playing and there are a host of bright young fellows who will be doing their darnedest to bring them down.

None of them is brighter, or younger, than Sergio Garcia, who after a brilliant amateur career is playing his first event as a professional. Garcia, 19, followed Olazábal into the conference room and impressed with his dignity. Only one cavil — why on earth did his advisers make him wear a suit? He is a professional golfer, after all, and it would all have been much more convincing had he dressed like one. Instead, he looked more like a trainee quantity surveyor.



Well-suited: Garcia dressed up for his first day at the office

FOR THE RECORD

BASEBALL

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Cleveland 5 Oakland 1; Detroit 0 Boston 1, Tampa Bay 5 Baltimore 3; Toronto 5 Anaheim 1, New York Yankees 4 Texas 0, Chicago White Sox 3 Seattle 1; Kansas City 7 Minnesota 8 (13inns)
NATIONAL LEAGUE: Cincinnati 2 New York Mets 3; Milwaukee 3 St Louis 8, Chicago Cubs 4 Houston 10, Arizona 8 Philadelphia 1, San Francisco 2 Florida 7; San Diego 3 Pittsburgh 7 (10inns), Los Angeles 5 Atlanta 4. Postponed: Colorado v Montreal

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Toronto 81 Atlanta 103, Utah 83 San Antonio 83, Chicago 83 Washington 77, Dallas 104 Phoenix 100; Milwaukee 95 Orlando 83, Golden State 102 Los Angeles Lakers 106 (OT). Postponed: Denver v Portland

CRICKET

PPP COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP: No play: First day of four: Southampton: Hampshire v Kent. Second day of four: Derby: Derbyshire v Glamorgan. Leicester: Leicestershire v Nottinghamshire. Lord's: Middlesex v Lancashire. Worcester: Worcestershire v Surrey. Third day of four: Edgbaston: Warwickshire 356-7 (T L Penney 73, K J Piper 66, D R Brown 55 not out) v Somerset
UNIVERSITY MATCH: No play: First day of three: Fenner's (Essex won toss): Cambridge University v Essex

CYCLING

BRUSSELS: Escaut Grand Prix (201km): 1, J Blijlevens (Neth, TVM) 4hr 35min, 2, E Zabel (Ger), 3, T Hoffman (Neth), 4, R Grabsch (Ger), 5, J Planckaert (Bel), 6, J Skovs (Lat) all at same time

FOOTBALL

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: Third division: Postponed: Swansea v Cambridge Utd
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Semi-final, first leg: Newcastle Utd 0 Coventry City 4
NIGERIA: World youth championship: Semi-final: Spain 3 Mali 1 (in Kaduna)

Tuesday's late results

UEFA CUP: Semi-finals, second leg: Bologna 1 Marseilles 1 (1-1 on agg: Marseilles win on away goal rule). Parma 2 Atletico Madrid 1 (Parma win 5-2 on agg)
FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Charlton 1 Tottenham 4
NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First division: Birmingham 1 QPR 0; Grimsby 1 Sheff Utd 2; Ipswich 1 Stockport 0; Norwich 2 Bolton 2. Second division: Chesterfield 0 Bristol Rovers 0; Preston 1 Walsall 0; Wrexham 2 Gillingham 1. Third division: Shrewsbury 2 Rotherham 3
NATIONWIDE CONFERENCE: Cheltenham 1 Forest Green 1, Rushden and Diamonds 0 Kingstonian 0
BANK OF SCOTLAND SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE: Dundee Utd 0 St Johnstone 1
ENDSLEIGH CHALLENGE TROPHY: Final, first leg: Farnborough 0 Doncaster 1
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Semi-final, first leg: West Ham 3 Everton 0
RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Aylesbury 0 Heybridge 1, Bishop's Stortford 0 Basingstoke 0, St Albans 4 Bromley 1.
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Blyth Spartans 4 Guiseley 1, Runcorn 2 Spennymoor 0; Stalybridge 1 Colwyn Bay 0.
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Bath City 8 Boston Utd 0; Cambridge City 1 Weymouth 0. Rothwell 2 Atherstone 0; Tamworth 3 Crawley Town 1
LEAGUE OF WALES: Connah's Quay 6 Rhyl 2; Newtown 2 Conwy 1; Rhayader 0 Bangor City 0
BASS IRISH CUP: Semi-final replay: Cliftonville 1 Linfield 0.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: First division: Coventry 7 Wolverhampton 0
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Southampton 5 Millwall 2. Barnet 1 Portsmouth 6.

MOTOR RALLYING

LLORET DE MAR, Spain: Catalonia Rally: Final positions: 1, P Bugalski (Fr, Citroën Xsara) 4hr 13min 45.6sec. 2, D Auriol (Fr, Toyota Corolla) at 31.8sec, 3, T Makinen (Fin, Mitsubishi Lancer) 3min 21.1sec; 4, F Loix (Bel, Mitsubishi Carisma) 2:35.4, 5, R Burns (GB, Subaru Impreza) 4:01.9; 6, J Kankkunen (Fin, Subaru Impreza) 4:47.3, 7, B Thiry (Bel, Subaru) 5:01.3, 8, O Gomez (Sp, Renault Mégane) 5:48.7, 9, C Sanz (Sp, Toyota Corolla) 6:20.0, 10, L Climent (Sp, Subaru Impreza) 6:28.8. World championship positions: Drivers: 1, Makinen 28pts, 2, Auriol 23, 3, C McRae (GB) 20; 4, C Sainz (Sp) 16, 5, Bugalski 10; 6, Kankkunen 8; 7, Burns 7. Constructors: 1, Toyota 44; 2, Mitsubishi 32; 3, Ford 26.

REAL TENNIS

HAMPTON COURT: Guy Salmon women's world championship: Second round (Great Britain unless stated): P Lumley bt B Sabbag (US) 6-1, 6-9; S Jones bt P Wilson 6-0, 6-0; S Metherell wo K Leeming (Aus)

RUGBY LEAGUE

NORTHERN FORD PREMIERSHIP: Postponed: Oldham v Featherstone

RUGBY UNION

WELSH LEAGUE: Premier division play-offs: Group A: Ebbw Vale 36 Pontypridd 23. Group B: Postponed: Aberavon v Caerphilly; Bridgend v Newport.
ANGLO-WELSH CLUB MATCH: Swansea 46 Bedford 31
BELLUNO, Italy: Women's European championship: First round: England 91 The Netherlands 3

SAILING

HYERES, France: Olympic Classes Regatta (after fourth day): 470 women (after eight races): 1, S Kedmi and A Fabrikant (Isr) 45pts, 2, N Via Dufresne and S Azon (Sp) 47, 3, S Trubel and C Grosser (Ger) 49. Soling (after seven races): 1, S Pichugin, V Korotkovs and S Timhkov (Ukr) 17, 2, R Hesner, D de Ridder and H Blakskjaer (Neth) 18; 3, J Schuemann, I Borkowski and G Bahr (Ger) 18. Europe (after 10 races): 1, M Matthysse (Neth) 10; 2, S Muhala (Fin) 23; 3, C Brouwer (Neth) 26. Tornado class (after six races): 1, R Hagara and H P Steinacher (Austria) 11; 2, M Booth and A Landenberger (Aus) 17, 3, D Bundock and J Forbes (Aus) 18. Mistral women (after seven races): 1, A Sensini (It) 13; 2, F Merret (Fr) 13; 3, L Lee Shan (HK) 19. Mistral men (after nine races): 1, J Andres Marciel (Sp) 16, 2, T Philp (Fiji) 17; 3, J Rodrigues (Por) 21. Finn (after eight races): 1, M Kusnierwicz (Pol) 22, 2, L Devoti (It) 49, 3, S Godefond (Bel) 55. Laser (after 10 races): 1, M Grabowski (Pol) 20; 2, K Suneson (Swe) 24; 3, M Blackburn (Aus) 29. 470 men (after 10 races): 1, P Forester and B Merrick (US) 13; 2, P Gildas and T Guy (Fr) 22, 3, M Koch and S Theuerkauf (Ger) 39

SHOOTING

BLOEMFONTEIN: World individual championships: 700m: 1, R Rush (Aus) 150.14; 2, K Reeve (US) 150.14, 3, P Pearce (Aus) 150.14. 800m: 1, A Luckman (GB) 150.10; 2, G Ubl (US) 150.7, 3, M Maxberry 150.7. 900m: 1, E Pintard (US) 149.8, 2, S Dunstall (Aus) 149.2, 3, E Claassen (SA) 148.6. Leading overall positions (after first round): 1, Claassen 446.20, 2, J van Rooyen (SA) 446.20, 3, Dunstall 446.15. British placings: 16, S Collings 441.19; 26, A Ringer 440.15.

SNOOKER

THE CRUCIBLE, Sheffield: Embassy world championship: First round: M Williams (Wales) bt I McCulloch (Eng) 10-4, J Parry (Eng) bt S Davis (Eng) 10-9, S Hendry (Scot) bt P Hunter (Eng) 10-8. Latest positions: J White (Eng) leads A McManus (Scot) 5-4, S Lee (Eng) leads J Lardner (Scot) 7-2.

SQUASH

SRA NATIONAL LEAGUE: Final (at St Albans): Capital One Nottingham 4 UK Packaging 1 (Capital One Nottingham names first): S Parke bt T Garner 13-15, 15-12, 15-6, 15-8; D Evans bt J Wellings 15-11, 10-15, 15-7, 15-9; L Beachill bt S Cowie 15-12, 15-7, 15-8; J Nicolle bt L Jemmett 15-9, 15-7, 15-5. T Bailey lost to L Charman 9-4, 3-9, 8-10, 1-9)

TENNIS

MONTE CARLO OPEN: Second round: F Clavet (Sp) bt T Enqvist (Swe) 6-2, 6-0; H Arazi (Mor) bt M Puerta (Arg) 6-1, 6-4; G Kuerten (Br) bt B Ulihrach (Cz) 6-7, 6-2, 6-4, M Philippoussis (Aus) bt R Delgado (Par) 7-6, 6-4, A Di Pasquale (Fr) bt V Santopadre (It) 6-3, 7-6, J Novak (Cz) bt G Rusedski (GB) 6-2, 6-2, A Costa (Sp) bt J van Lottum (Neth) 6-2, 6-3; K Alami (Mor) bt T Muster (Austria) 6-3, 6-3, I Ljubicic (Cro) bt Y Kafelnikov (Russ) 6-1, 6-2; S Grosjean (Fr) bt T Haas (Ger) 7-5, 6-2

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

Cup Winners' Cup
Semi-finals, second leg
Lazio (1) v L Moscow (1) (7.45)
Real Mallorca (1) v Chelsea (1) (8.0)

Nationwide Conference
Cheltenham v Yeovil (7.45)
Forest Green v Morecambe (7.45)

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Cambridge City v Bath. Southern division: Raunds v Folkestone. Midland division: Sutton Coldfield v Hinckley.
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Leigh v Runcorn. First division: Burscough v Radcliffe, Hucknall v Harrogate, Stocksbridge v Witton. Unifilla first division Cup: Final: Droylsden v Ashton Utd.
RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Hendon v Harrow; Chesham v Bromley (7.45); St Albans v Dulwich (7.45). First division: Leatherhead v Wealdstone, Romford v Worthing. Second division: Windsor and Eton v Bracknell. Third division: Epsom and Ewell v Clapton.
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Wycombe v Cambridge (2.0).
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Birmingham v Derby (at Hednesford, 7.15), Manchester United v Liverpool (7.0). First division: Manchester City v Port Vale (7.0); Tranmere v Sheffield Wednesday (7.15)
LEAGUE OF WALES: Connah's Quay v Bangor City.
FAI HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Dundalk v UCD (7.45)
SCHWEPPES ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Stansted v Bowers Utd
COMPLETE MUSIC HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: Cirencester Academy v Highworth, Shortwood v Banbury
ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTH LEAGUE: First division: Morpeth v West Auckland
SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bridgwater v Chippenham
MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Hillingdon Borough v Buckingham Athletic, New Bradwell St Peter v Ruislip Manor
BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Gornal v Star, Lye v Kington; Walsall Wood v Ludlow; Westfields v Ettingshall
JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Lowestoft v Newmarket
JEWSON SOUTH WESTERN LEAGUE CUP: Semi-final: Falmouth v Torpoint
UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Cogenhoe v St Neots
INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: Rocester v Oldbury. Invitation Cup: Semi-final: Atherstone v Bridgnorth.
NORTH WESTERN TRAINS LEAGUE: Floodlit Trophy: Final: Kidsgrove Athletic v Clitheroe

CRICKET

PPP county championship
11.0, second day of four, 104 overs minimum
SOUTHAMPTON: Hampshire v Kent
HOVE: Sussex v Northamptonshire
HEADINGLEY: Yorkshire v Gloucestershire
11.0, third day of four, 104 overs minimum
DERBY: Derbyshire v Glamorgan
LEICESTER: Leicestershire v Nottinghamshire
LORD'S: Middlesex v Lancashire
WORCESTER: Worcestershire v Surrey
11.0, final day of four, 96 overs minimum
EDGBASTON: Warwickshire v Somerset
University match
11.30, second day of three
FENNER'S: Cambridge University v Essex
SECOND XI CHAMPIONSHIP: Third day of four: Chester-le-Street: Durham v Northamptonshire. Canterbury: Kent v Somerset. Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Middlesex. Second day of three: Cardiff: Glamorgan v Essex. Bristol: Gloucestershire v Worcestershire.

OTHER SPORT

GOLF: Scottish women's strokeplay (at Troon)

At 42, Scott aims to break sub-four minute mile barrier

Oldest kid on track is running towards finish line

Age, illness and injury are the cruellest opponents in sport. Anyone brave enough to try to outrun them wins admiration even if he looks certain to lose.

And win or lose, they don't come any braver than Steve Scott. This week, the track world has been fascinated by pre-event publicity from the Drake Relays meeting in Des Moines, Iowa. According to reports, this Saturday, just a couple of weeks before his 43rd birthday, Scott will attempt to become the oldest athlete to break four minutes for the mile.

Scott, of all people, should know what he is taking on. He first broke that barrier as long ago as January 1977 in Los Angeles and since then he has run 136 sub-four minute miles — more than any other man in track history.

BRYANT'S EYE

Throughout the 1980s he haunted the commercial circus of grand prix races in Europe and America, living out of a suitcase and thrashing out top-class miles. His opponents included such legends as Sebastian Coe, Steve Ovett and Steve Cram, as well as John Walker, the great New Zealander, his most frequent sparring partner and the first man to run under 3min 50sec.

Scott ran his last sub-four minute mile back where he had started, in Los Angeles, at 37, in 1993. By then he was already dreaming of cracking the barrier when he was past the age of 40.

That prize was snatched from him when Eamonn Coghlan, the Irishman, ran 3:58:15 in 1994 at the age of 41 on an indoor track in Boston. The sub-four by a veteran has still not been achieved outdoors, where the record is 4:02:53, held by Dave Moorcroft, who was 40 when he ran it.

Within weeks of Coghlan's record, Scott's phenomenal ability was overtaken by an opponent far more threatening than any who had ever pulled on spikes — he was struck by cancer.

Scott was diagnosed with testicular cancer in April 1994 and opted to undergo surgery in May. He rejected chemotherapy because he feared it might damage his lungs and he still hoped to keep running.

"After Eamonn Coghlan broke four minutes in March of 94, I more or less retired," Scott said. "I thought there was nothing really left. But when I came down with cancer the four-minute mile became my focal point. Eamonn might be the first to break it, but I could be the first to break four minutes who's also a cancer survivor."

Scott resumed training three months after his surgery, still dreaming of one more sub-four minute triumph. "In a lifetime of running I had learnt to face pain," he said in his biography. "I got ready to face the pain of cancer. I ran through the whole picture in my mind. Whatever my thoughts, running sub-four at 40 always popped up as well. I would not let go of my running goals. My life depended on that, too."

Twenty years ago exactly, Scott was the first to break the four-minute mark at the Drake Relays with 3:55:26. He had shown up the year before with the intention of setting the record, but woke up on the day of the race with a temperature of 103. He vowed he would return and crack the mark. He did it in style.

This time he is more cautious. "No promises," he said. "I cannot break four minutes whenever I want to now. I think I have a reasonable chance at this point. It would be kind of a storybook ending to come back 20 years later and achieve it there. It would be fun."

The sad truth, however, is that there is unlikely to be a fairytale ending to the Steve Scott story this weekend. His most recent race was at 5,000 metres at Carlsbad, California, where he ran 14min 30sec — not really an indication of four-minute speed.

Then a couple of days later, on March 31, Scott suffered a minor strain in his calf muscle and the injury stopped him training properly for nine days. It was April 10 before he could run freely again and he is still not back to anything like his peak form.

"At 23," he said, "you can recover your fitness in a week, but at 43 it takes two or three weeks and it's not there yet."

So he is likely to have a tough time when he lines up for the mile on Saturday, when his competition will include Paul McMullen, America's leading miler, who won the race last year in 3:59:12.

'I could never live without being able to test myself'

But Scott never gives up. If he fails this weekend he plans to find another race in late May. "I could never live without testing myself," he once said, "and after a quarter-century of taking the starting line, I'm not ready to hang up my spikes yet. I still feel like Scottie the Miler, a kid at heart."

This 42-year-old kid has already outkicked cancer and done enough training to give himself the speed and stamina to outrun time itself. So who knows, if he can shake off his calf injury, maybe there is just one more sub-four minute mile to be squeezed out of the ageing and battered body of Scottie the Amazing Miler.

JOHN BRYANT

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



Even when he was fighting cancer, Scott was dreaming of the day when he would be back on the track trying to add to his world record of 136 sub-four minute miles

Whitaker aims to buck World Cup odds again

EQUESTRIANISM

From Jenny MacArthur in Gothenburg

JOHN WHITAKER, winner of the showjumping World Cup in 1990 and 1991, is "quietly confident" about his chances for the event that begins today in the Scandanavium arena here. Whitaker, 43, the only rider to have qualified for every final since the competition began in 1979, and Michael, his younger brother, are the only Britons among the 42 riders from 20 nations who have qualified this year.

While not one of the favourites — that honour is shared by Ludger Beerbaum, of Germany, the European champion, and Rodrigo Pessoa, of Brazil, the world champion and holder of the World Cup — John Whitaker comes to the final with two in-form horses, Virtual Village Grannusch, on which, against considerable odds, he won the first two legs of the final in Helsinki last year, and Heyman, on which, in similar circumstances, he won the first round of the world championships in Rome last October.

Grannusch is now 20, but Whitaker will rely on him again for the opening speed leg of the three-part final tonight. Traditionally, riders must finish in the top ten in this leg to have any chance of success.

"He's a touch on the fat side but feels very good," Whitaker said. "I've kept him fresh and only jumped him at two local shows this year." He has the advantage of being drawn 31st in contrast to last year, when he was first to go.

Whitaker will then switch to Heyman for the bigger second and third legs tomorrow evening and on Sunday afternoon. Although the ten-year-old gelding, on which he was runner-up to Trevor Coyle, the Irish rider, and Cruising in the Dortmund Grand Prix last week, had a back pole down at the penultimate oxer in the training competition yesterday, Whitaker was undeterred. "I was just using it to train a little bit and Heyman was having a good look," he said. "He can get a bit erratic, but if he jumps as well as he did in Dortmund we should be all right."

Michael Whitaker has yet to improve on his third place in the 1994 final. He intends to ride Virtual Village Ashley, on which he was third in the Olympia World Cup qualifier, in all three legs. "He feels good and he's a fairly level-headed horse," he said. "I just hope I get off to a good start."

Beerbaum and Pessoa were both in buoyant mood yesterday. Beerbaum declared that Ratina, the mare on which he won the World Cup in 1993 and an Olympic team gold medal in 1996, felt "as good as ever". Pessoa, 26, who became the first rider to win the World Cup and world championships last year, is equally satisfied with Gandini Baloubet du Rouet, his French-bred stallion.

Other leading contenders include Coyle, who has had a superb season with Cruising, winning both the Millstreet and Geneva qualifiers, and Peter Charles, his compatriot, with Traxdata Carnavelley, winners of the Berlin Grand Prix last November.

Switzerland has chances with Willi Melliger, on Calvaro, his 1996 Olympic silver medal-winner, and Beat Mandli, on Positano, runners-up in the Dortmund qualifier last week. With the United States fielding a ten-strong team, including Leslie Howard, the winner in 1986, the stage is set for an enthralling contest.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 49

FLEECH
(a) Flattery: a piece of flattery. Of obscure origin, but at any rate it is musty Teutonic.

GETON
(a) A small flag. Of obscure origin. The sense would suggest identity with the French *guidon*. "Every baronet shall have his banner displayed in ye field if he be chief captain, every knight his penon, every squire or gentleman his geton or standard. A streamer shall be slyt & so shall a standard as well as a geton."

GODOWN
(c) A warehouse or store for goods, in India and other parts of Eastern Asia. Malay, supposed to be from the Telegu and Tamil words meaning a place where goods lie.

GROLL
(c) A foolish or superficial person. A gossip or smatterer.

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE
1 ... Qxd2+! 2 Rxd2 Re1+ 3 Rd1 Rexd1 checkmate

TELEVISION CHOICE

Love story on an epic scale

Arena: Salman Rushdie and The Ground Beneath His Feet
BBC2, 11.20pm

Rushdie's new novel, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, is a three-sided love story on an epic, mythic scale, moving across three decades and three continents. It has as its setting the world of pop music — a bold decision for a writer not generally associated with that world. But, as he reveals in an interview with Francine Stock, it reflects his own life (he recalls first hearing and identifying with the earliest rock 'n' roll records and how being Indian was "cool" in Swinging Sixties London) and enables him to make the story (a reworking of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice) more directly involving to younger readers.

Salman Rushdie discusses his latest novel in an *Arena* special (BBC2, 11.20pm)

Aussie Birds: Pelican Island
Channel 5, 7.30pm

There is nothing complicated about this series, running Monday to Friday this week, which tells the story, tonight, of the Australian variety of the pelican. It is, however, an extraordinary tale, since these graceful fliers and voracious fish-eaters are virtual fossil birds, the species having survived almost unchanged for millennia. Tomorrow: Soaring Hunters. The Australian little eagle.

Making It
BBC2, 7.30pm (England and Wales only)

Vivien Maxwell, a mother of five and a farmer's wife living near Loch Lomond, surprised many when, as a student of interior design at the Glasgow School of Art, she won the Master's Medal at the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry. As a result, she was offered a short-term contract in London with Rodney Fitch, a company specialising in retail shop and restaurant interiors. Although both sides seem to have given it their best shot, circumstances, the distance from home and the fact that she was not computer literate as a designer combined to make her experience less than happy and she abandoned her contract without notice.

Dispatches
Channel 4, 9.30pm

A highly topical and appropriate programme, in which a family of four in Walsall are challenged to do without their two cars for a week. If the Government's declared intention to woo us away from our reliance on private cars is to mean anything, this is exactly what should be happening. Odd, perhaps, that a "minority" television channel, often pilloried for its irresponsible approach to broadcasting, is the first to do anything concrete about it.

NYPD Blue
Channel 4, 10pm

Simone is dead, long live the new kid on the block. No sooner has Jimmy Smits left the 15th Precinct than blond, boyish Rick Schroder is checking in to become the new partner for Sipowicz (Dennis Franz). Schroder, as Danny Sorenson, looks like a teenager but quickly proves worthy of the respect of his new team-mates, and tonight's story of a drive-by shooting and subsequent bloody revenge among drug-dealers sets up several ways in which he will interact with the existing company. A promising debut. **Tony Patrick**

RADIO CHOICE

A Tribute to Yehudi Menuhin
Radio 3, 7.30pm

What better indicator could there be of the esteem in which Menuhin was held during his long life in music? This tribute to him in words and music eats up almost the whole of tonight's Radio 3 schedules. If any facet of his contribution to 20th-century music-making and philanthropy has been left out, I can't detect it in the summary put out by the BBC. Among the recordings we will hear are the second movement of Menuhin's 1932 recording of Elgar's Violin Concerto, with the composer conducting, and Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante, K364, with the violinist partnering the viola virtuoso Rudolf Barshai. The climactic work is Menuhin playing the Beethoven Violin Concerto, with Furtwangler conducting the Philharmonia.

I See the Moon
Radio 4, 2.15pm

In telling you about Alex Ferguson's down-to-earth ghost story, I must be very careful not to give the game away. So what can I write about *I See the Moon* without being a spoilsport? Firstly, I think, I can tell you that the town-planner storyteller, played by Cliff Howells, is as haunted as a grown-up as he was as a child. Secondly, the silent little girl whom he finds sitting at the top of a staircase in a rambling old house, is as near to being a ghost as the spectral night-walker in *Hamlet*. Thirdly, the town-planner is a thorn in the side of the crooked development company who plan to put up executive housing where country houses once stood. And that, I'm afraid, is as far as I dare go. **Peter Davalle**

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Jo Whiley **3.00pm** Chris Moyles **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Dave Pearce. The best in music **8.00** Steve Lamacq: The Evening Session. New music and session tracks **10.00** The Global Update. Jennifer Cox presents travel reports **10.10** John Peel. Musical treats **12.00** Andy Kershaw **2.00am** Clive Warren **4.00** Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00** *Jimmy Young* **2.00pm** *Ed Stewart* **5.05** Johnnie Walker **7.00** Bob Harris Country. With Sara Evans **8.00** Paul Jones **9.00** Take It Easy: California Cool (5/6) **9.30** The News Huddlines **10.00** Boogie Woogie with George Melly (1/6) **10.30** Lynn Parsons **12.00** Katrina Leskanich **3.00am** Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00** The Midday News **1.00pm** Ian Payne **4.00** Drive **7.00** News Extra **7.30** Wembley, the Church of Football (3/4) **8.00** The Thursday Match. Real Mallorca v Chelsea, Cup Winners' Cup semi-final, second leg **10.00** Late Night Live, including *The Financial World Tonight* **1.00am** Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00** Justice With Jacobs **1.00pm** Anna Raeburn **4.00** The Sports Zone **7.00** One to One with Andy Gray **8.00** Jackie Mason **10.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

VIRGIN

6.30am The Breakfast Show **9.30** Mark Forrest **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **6.45** Pete and Geoff **10.00** Gary Davies **1.00am** Richard Allen **4.30** Phil Kennedy

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** World News **7.15** Outlook **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** World Business Report **8.15** Insight **8.30** Assignment **9.00** World News **9.05** From Our Own Correspondent **9.20** Off the Shelf: Frankenstein **9.35** The Works **10.00** World News **10.05** Understanding Cancer **10.20** Andy Kershaw's World of Music **10.50** Sports Round-Up **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Britain Today **11.45** World Business Report **12.00** Newsdesk **12.30pm** Assignment **1.00** World News **1.05** Outlook **1.45** Sports Round-Up **2.00** Newshour **3.00** World News **3.05** The Works **3.30** Meridian Books **4.00** World News **4.05** Sports Round-Up **4.15** Westway **4.30** The Greenfield Collection **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Insight **6.00** Newsdesk **6.30** Record News **6.45** Sports Round-Up **7.00** World News **7.15** Britain Today **7.30** Assignment **8.00** World News **8.05** The Works **8.30** Coffee - A Hellish Brew **8.45** Off the Shelf: Frankenstein **9.00** Newshour **10.00** World News **10.05** World Business Report **10.20** Britain Today **10.30** Meridian Books **11.00** World News **11.15** Sports Round-Up **11.30** Blues World **12.00** World News **12.05am** Outlook **12.45** Insight **1.00** The World Today **1.30** The Works **1.55** My Century **2.00** The World Today **2.30** Westway **2.45** Performance **3.00** The World Today **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today **4.20** Sports Round-Up **4.30** The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. A selection of rousing music to start the day **8.00** Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour and CD of the Week **12.00** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones presents favourite music **2.00pm** Concerto. Boccherini (Cello Concerto No 5 in D major) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance **6.30** Newsnight. The latest headlines and sport updates **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Enesco (Symphony No 1 in E flat major); Bartok (Concerto for Orchestra); Kodaly (Hary Janos Suite) **11.00** Mann at Night. A chance to wind down with the sound of ambient music **2.00am** Concerto. Boccherini (Cello Concerto No 5 in D major) (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths. Early Breakfast Show

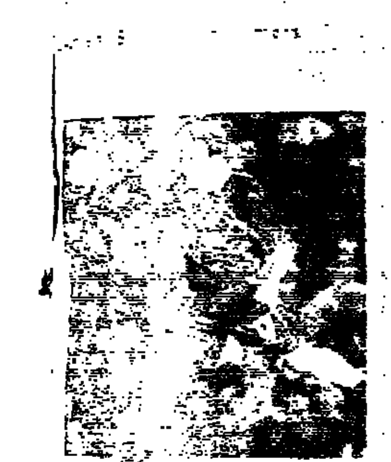
RADIO 3

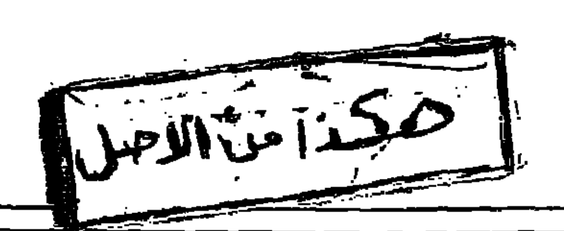
6.00am On Air Petroc Trelawny with music and arts news, including a review of Michael Attenborough's production of *Othello* at the RSC
9.00 Masterworks Corelli (Concerto grosso in D, Op 6 No 4); Anon (Batalia famossa); Scarlatti (Sonatas in B minor, KK87; in F minor, KK386); Telemann (Overture-Suite in G, Burlesque de Don Quichotte); Antonio de Literes (Azis y Galatea, excerpts); Falla (Nights in the Gardens of Spain); Corelli (Concerto grosso in B flat, Op 6 No 5)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Gwyneth Jones Joan Bakewell talks to Gwyneth Jones about her role as Brunnhilde in Wagner's *Ring* cycle and her 17 consecutive years singing Wagner at Bayreuth
11.00 Sound Stories: Five Great Rivers *The Rhone*
12.00 Composer of the Week: Stanford
1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Bernard Roberts, piano. Haydn (Sonata in E, H XVI 31); Schubert (Piano Sonata in D, D850) (r)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC Philharmonic. Tchaikovsky (Capriccio Italien; Overture, Romeo and Juliet); Borodin (Polovtsian Dances, Prince Igor); Orff (Carmina burana);
4.00 The Piano: The Diggy-Diggy-Dee School (r)
5.00 In Tune With Sean Rafferty. Music includes Francaix (Octet) and Hummel (Trumpet Concerto in E)
7.30 A Tribute to Menuhin See Choice **7.35** Bach, Violin Concerto in E, BWV1042: Bath Festival Orchestra under Menuhin, violin)); **7.55** The Prodigy. Bernard Keeffe explores Menuhin's early years as a performer and recording artist; **8.20** Elgar (Violin Concerto, Op 61; Menuhin, LSO under Elgar); **8.35** The Commissioner. Lynne Walker examines the works commissioned by Menuhin; **8.55** Bartok (Sonata for Solo Violin, 1st mvt: Menuhin); **9.10** The Master Musician; **9.40** Mozart (Sinfonia concertante in E flat, K364: Menuhin, violin, Rudolf Barshai, viola, Bath Festival Orchestra); **10.15** Beethoven (Piano Trio in D, Op 70 No 1, Ghost: Menuhin, violin, Maurice Gendron, cello, Hephzibah Menuhin, piano); **11.00** The Legacy; **11.15** Beethoven (Violin Concerto Op 61: Yehudi Menuhin, Philharmonia under Wilhelm Furtwangler)
12.00 Through the Night Includes **12.05am** Horneman (Overture, Aladdin), **12.15** Castelnuovo-Tedesco (Capriccio diabolico); **12.35** Tartini (Violin Concerto in D minor); **12.50** Handel (Tamerlano), **1.00** Danish RCO, Sergei Terentyev, piano Beethoven, Mozart, Liszt; **2.00** Schubert (String Quartet in G, D887); **2.50** Biber (Sonata No 1 a 8); **3.00-4.30** Schools: Music Workshop; **3.20** Let's Move! **3.40** Words Alive! **3.55** First Steps in Drama; **4.10** Listen and Write; **4.30** Toivo Kuula (South Ostrobothnian Suite No 2); **4.50** Beethoven (Sonata for piano in F minor); **5.15** Lassus (In religione homo vivit, motet); **5.25** Mozart (Horn Quintet in E flat major); **5.40** Schumann (Introduction and Allegro appassionato)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today With Anna Hill
6.00 Today with Sue MacGregor and James Naughtie
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament Political round-up
9.00 Melvyn Bragg: In Our Time Guests join Melvyn Bragg to consider ideas and events which have influenced the present age
9.30 Blind Man on the Rampage New series. Peter White's perspective on life without sight, exploring the world through sound, touch, smell and the help of others (1/5)
9.45 (FM) Serial: Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow Adaptation of Jerome K. Jerome's tales of an idler's approach to coping with everyday life
9.45 (LW) Daily Service
10.00 Woman's Hour Jenni Murray talks to actress Eleanor Bron. Includes *Diary of a Provincial Lady*
11.00 Crossing Continents Nigerian villagers who have resorted to using traditional magic to fight for a stake in local oilfields
11.30 My Uncle Freddie By Alex Ferguson. Comedy set on Tyneside, charting the relationship between a boy and his uncle. Grandad Fergie is found dead and Lecky's future in Jarrow is assured. With Shaun Prendergast and Gareth Brown. Last in series (6/6) (r)
12.00 (FM) News
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.04pm You and Yours With Liz Barclay and John Waite **1.00 The World at One** With Nick Clarke
1.30 Open Country Richard Uridge unearths tales from the countryside of Essex
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: I See the Moon See Choice
3.00 Call You and Yours: 0870 010 0444
3.28 Appeal On behalf of the Bobby Moore Fund, which promotes research into bowel cancer (r)
3.30 A Week at the Pitt Rivers Christina Hardyment look at the English longbow (4/5)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Narrated by Anna Massey (r)
4.00 Nice Work Alison Mitchell investigates the changing world of employment
4.30 The Material World Computer chips
5.00 PM With Clare English
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 That Reminds Me Bill Pertwee looks back on his regular contributions to Radio 4 (4/6)
7.00 The Archers
7.15 Front Row Arts round-up, with Francine Stock
7.45 Diary of a Provincial Lady E.M. Delafield's household journal, starring Imelda Staunton and Saskia Whickham (r)
8.00 The Khalsa Concluding part. Indarjit Singh learns the concerns of modern Sikhs in their homes in India and farther afield (2/2)
8.30 The Week in Westminster With Peter Riddell of *The Times*
9.00 Connect How a computer program, used to track down serial killers, is being put to work by the British police. Presented by Quentin Cooper
9.30 Melvyn Bragg: In Our Time (r)
10.00 The World Tonight With Robin Lustig
10.45 Book at Bedtime: The Service of Clouds Joanna David reads part four of Susan Hill's ten-part drama
11.00 Late Night on 4: Do Go On Griff Rhys Jones, Graeme Garden and Melanie Hudson join Ainsley Elliot in a satirical discussion on media absurdity, focusing on manners
11.30 (FM) Your Place or Mine? (4/5) (r)
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament
12.00 News
12.30am The Late Book: Biggest Elvis Written by P.F. Kluge and read by Ron Berglas
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 90.2-92.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5 LIVE.** MW 693, 909. **WORLD SERVICE.** MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). **CLASSIC FM.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. **TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089.
Television and radio listings compiled by Perry Cleveland-Peck, Ian Hughes, Gillian Maxey, Jane Gregory and Barry O'Keefe





Potted history of BBC sport's last bastion

When Luigi Barbarito, the Pope's emissary, found himself watching a sponsored snooker championship at Tyburn convent about ten years ago, he confided to his hostesses that playing snooker gives you firm hands and helps to build up character, making it "the ideal recreation for dedicated nuns".

Was Luigi making the point that a misspent youth needn't stop anyone getting into the habit? Or was he just making small talk? It's hard to tell. But maybe the BBC will enlighten us soon with a programme exploring the Vatican's historic links with snooker, because the BBC — having lost the rights to cover key sporting fixtures — is determined to milk every drop of TV time from those sports still in its grip.

Hence its recent golf coverage included special previews aimed at alerting dozy viewers to the imminent feast of TV golf, a game that attracts large audiences in spite of the fact that the only person with powerful enough eyesight to spot the ball once it has left the tee seems to be the commentator: everyone else looks up into the sky, apparently aping some ancient tribal custom, but they no more expect to catch sight of the little speck of white than they would expect to catch sight of Alastair Campbell smiling at a journalist.

So just in case there were any viewers out there who felt they were not getting sufficient snooker input from the BBC's dawn-to-dawn coverage of the World Championship at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre, *Leviathan* (BBC2) came to the rescue with a potted history of the game. This turned out to be much more interesting than watching the snooker itself.

Snooker, it turns out, was invented a little over 100 years ago by a bored expatriate colonel in India, who devised the variations to the traditional game of billiards on a rainy afternoon in the Raj.

Maybe every snooker fan already knows this. Maybe in the snooker halls of South London the patrons talk of nothing else but of how — every time they go to pot the pink — they can't help recalling Diana Vreeland's observation that pink is the navy blue of India. But it was news to me that snooker began life as a godsend to jaded expats (not such a godsend, of course, to elephants, who suddenly found themselves having to provide enough tusks for sets of 22 ivory balls rather than for sets of just three, as for billiards).

To those who have always found it amusing that the BBC once used to broadcast snooker on black and white television, it was even more startling to learn that before that the BBC actually broadcast ball-by-ball coverage of snooker on radio, which sounded so hilariously incomprehensible that the only person today who could pull off the job of a radio snooker commentator with any conviction would be John Prescott.

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

There's no reason why, of course, Prescott shouldn't continue his job as Deputy Prime Minister while moonlighting as a radio snooker commentator. Everyone moonlights nowadays.

Spin City (Channel 4) returned for a genial third series last night starring not only Michael J. Fox as the deputy mayor of New York City, but also two of America's top chat show hosts. Conan O'Brien was moonlighting as a loony zookeeper, and David Letterman apparently provided the voice of Rags, an ageing pooch belonging to one of the mayor's team. As for Mayor Randall Winston himself, the credits say that he's played by Barry Bostwick; but doesn't he look suspiciously like PR man Max Clifford?

American actors and TV stars seem desperate to perform cameos in hit sitcoms: many voices on *The Simpsons* are provided by Hollywood stars. The same goes for callers to Frasier Crane's radio phone-in show on *Frasier*. Big names ached to guest on *Friends*. They queue up for a seat on Larry Sanders's sofa. Maybe it's the same motivation that makes people want to show their face at a new, impossibly fashionable restaurant — just to show they have the clout to get past the velvet rope without begging.

You half wonder if the trend is spreading here when you see **The Naked Chef** (BBC2), because its hip, handsome star — Jamie Oliver — looks spookily like the late, famously womanising, racing driver James Hunt did at about the same age. Last night, this TV chef for the MTV generation was making supper for his sister's hen night. The food looked great, but by the time they'd got to the liqueurs the girls decided to abandon Jamie and hit town in search of the real James Hunt.

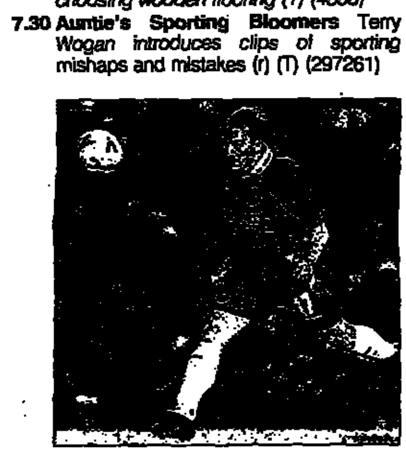
And in **The Pull of the City** (BBC2), George Monbiot, the eloquent environmental campaigner, looked astonishingly like a man weeing into the wind. In his documentary, *London Pride*, he was aiming to show us that booming land prices are threatening London's vibrant social, economic and cultural climate by making it impossible for any but the very rich to live in the city. But haven't London house prices always been rising? What if it is precisely because of London's vibrant economy that all those ethnic and cultural minorities were attracted to the capital in the first place?

Monbiot wonders if it is paradoxical that Richard Rogers, who dreams of a London with more public spaces, is building an apartment complex on the Thames with £4 million penthouses. But what if the people who are lured to London by the availability of luxury housing are the same people who create the revenues and pay the taxes that help to fund more public spaces in London?

The whole thing may be even more baffling than listening to snooker on radio.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (61648)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (12367)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (9705938)
9.45 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (914087)
10.15 The Vanessa Show (T) (4097862)
11.00 News; Weather (T) (5586342)
11.05 City Hospital (T) (9796071)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (8748254)
12.00 Going for a Song (5580241)
12.25pm Just a Minute (T) (3881218)
12.55 The Weather Show (T) (11366396)
1.00 News; Weather (T) (62844)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (58704648)
1.40 Neighbours (T) (16955445)
2.05 Through the Keyhole (r) (T) (51228071)
2.30 Snooker: World Championship David Vine presents live coverage on the final day of the first round (7210342)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (8176342) **3.45** Chucklewood Critters (2236280) **4.10** Alvin and the Chipmunks (1080464) **4.20** Julia Jekyll and Harriet Hyde (5543754) **4.35** Goosebumps (7244087) **5.00** Newsround (5103984) **5.10** Miami 7 (2037483)
5.33 Rewind (T) (578613)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (804532)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (209)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (261)
7.00 Watchdog: On the House *New series.* How the performance of the local school *can add £50,000 to a home's value, and* the American approach to dealing with *flood damage. Plus, the pros and cons of* DIY conveyancing and a feature on *choosing wooden flooring* (T) (4358)
7.30 Auntie's Sporting Bloomers Terry *Wogan introduces clips of sporting* mishaps and mistakes (r) (T) (297261)



Chelsea's Albert Ferrer in action in the first leg, on April 8 (7.45pm)

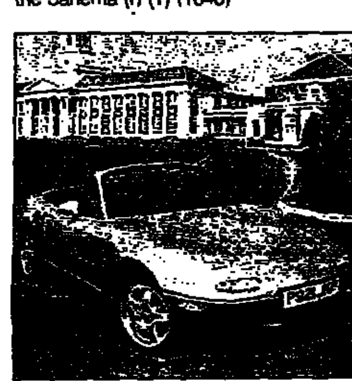
7.45 Match of the Day Live Real Majorca v Chelsea (kick-off **8.00pm**). Coverage of the Cup Winners Cup semi-final second leg from the Lluis Sitjar stadium in Majorca. Presented by Des Lynam. In the event of extra time and penalties, subsequent programmes are subject to change (T) (14609984)
10.00 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (619367)
10.35 The Frank Skinner Show Comedy and conversation (T) (840803)
11.05 Question Time From Glasgow (T) (420209)
12.05am Barbarosa (1981) A legendary gunslinger *teams up with a naive* German outlaw to escape a bloodthirsty Mexican clan. Western, starring Willie Nelson. Directed by Fred Schepisi (T) (1032385) [FILM]
1.30 Weather (2816859)
1.35 BBC News 24 (86550491)

WALES:

10.30-10.35 Party Election Broadcast (197464) **1.30am-1.35** News (2816859)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Noddy in Toyland (12385) **7.30** Top Cat (8675613) **7.55** Blue Peter (8003006) **8.20** Dastardly and Muttley (8718377) **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (3291396) **8.50** Pingu **8.55** Small Stories **9.00** Daytime On Two: Job Bank **9.10** Watch Out (9358716) **9.30** Watch **9.45** Come Outside (7189087) **10.00** Children's BBC: Teletubbies (61087) **10.30** Daytime On Two: Storytime (3737532) **10.45** The *Experimenter (9186613)* ***11.05*** *Space Ark* **11.15** Zig Zag **11.35** Pathways of Belief *(2097396)* ***11.50*** *Susanne* (2074445) **12.10pm** The Geography Programme (7451700) **12.30** *Working Lunch* (93272) **1.00** Wishing (38939025)
1.10 The Leisure Hour (r) (1548629)
2.10 The Phil Silvers Show (r) (89610377)
2.40 News; *Weather (T) (8021629)*
2.45 Westminster (T) (5860261)
3.25 News; Weather (T) (5517667)
3.30 Snooker: World Championship First-round coverage (741071)
6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Sisko, Kira and Bashir are stranded (r) (T) (644984)
6.45 Snooker: World Championship Further coverage (T) (144209)
7.30 [CHOICE] **Making It** Profile of mature design student Vivien Maxwell. Last in the series (T) *(777)*
8.00 Ray Mears' World of Survival Documentary about the Amazonian tribe, the Sanema (r) (T) (1648)



A celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Mazda MX-5 (8.30pm)

8.30 Top Gear *A guide to buying a* second-hand car (T) (3483)
9.00 Modern Times Revamp of a run-down estate (r) (T) (652025)
9.50 Snooker: World Championship First-round coverage (406209)
10.30 Newsnight (T) (914938)
11.18 Video Nation Shorts (T) (969434)
11.20 [CHOICE] **Arena** Salman Rushdie discusses his new novel, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (T) (757990)
11.55 Holiday Weather (853938)
12.00 Despatch Box (67946)
12.30am BBC Learning Zone: Open University. Pacific Studies **1.00** Just in Time? **1.50** Open Late: Social Sciences **2.00** Further Education: Art and Design **4.00** Teaching Film and Media: Film Education — The Holocaust on Film **4.30** Film Education: The Distributor's Tale **5.00** Planet Europe — Making Friends **5.15** Planet Europe — Having a Voice **5.45** Open University: Global Tourism **6.10** Women, Children and Work

WALES:

11.05am Your Assembly (5670735) **11.15-11.15** ***Daytime On Two*** (926322) **7.30pm Ray Mears' World of Survival** (r) (T) (777) **8.00-8.30 Shop Talk** (1/3) (1648) ***11.15*** **Party Election Broadcast** (969434)

HTV

5.30am ITV Morning News (80700)
6.00 GMTV (2648648)
9.25 Trisha (T) (3391919)
10.30 This Morning (T) (49908087)
12.15pm HTV News; *Weather (T) (7781071)*
12.30 ITV News; Weather (T) (2485025)
12.55 Shortland Street *(1544803)*
1.30 Lie Detector (T) (16951629)
1.55 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (5819087)
2.40 Wheel of Fortune (T) (2735342)
3.10 ITV News Headlines (T) (5516938)
3.15 HTV News (T) (5515209)
3.20 CITV: Maisy (5505822) **3.25** Dewdle (5595445) **3.35** Sylvester and Tweety (5343803) **3.50** Lavender Castle (5364396) **4.05** Hey Arnold! (7822919) **4.30** Children's Ward (984)
5.00 Catchphrase (r) (T) (2990)
5.30 WALES: Crazy Creatures The Welsh Mountain zoo (T) (464)
5.30 WEST: Pleasure Guide *(T) (464)*
5.58 HTV Weather (655716)
6.00 HTV News (T) (377)
6.25 WALES: ***Party Election Broadcast*** By the Wales Green Party (470290)
6.29 HTV Crimestoppers (470290)
6.30 ITV Evening News; Weather (T) (629)
7.00 Emmerdale (T) (2754)
7.30 WALES: The Insiders (2/4) (613)
7.30 WEST: We Can Work It Out (613)
8.00 The Bill Harker and Beech tackle a violent family. Police drama, with Matthew Crompton and Andrew Paul (T) (6445)



Leo (Sasha Dhawan) and Anita (Dinita Gohil) take shelter (9pm)

9.00 The Last Train Jandra lies injured *following the collapse of the factory floor,* and Ian suffers a series of terrifying visions. Part four of the post-apocalypse drama, with Amita Dhiri, James Hazeldine and Janet Dale (4/6) (T) (6209)
10.00 WALES: The Ferret (91613)
10.00 WEST: ***Tonight with Trevor McDonald*** Report on a legal drug used in "date *rape" attacks (T) (9396)*
10.30 WALES: The Sharp End Reaction to the *forthcoming National Assembly elections* (73261)
11.00 ITV Nightly News; *Weather* (T) (557822)
11.20 HTV News and Weather (T) (353613)
11.30 WALES: Tonight with Trevor McDonald (T) (54483)
11.30 WEST: A Trip in the Cosmic Buggy A night at the Goldiggers Foam Party (T) (87025)
12.00 Public Morals (r) (54472)
12.30am The Jerry Springer Show (T) (9944656)
1.15 Trainspotters (6/13) (279762)
2.15 Pop Down the Pub (42255)
2.45 Box Office America (4705410)
3.10 Cybernet (84160410)
3.40 Murder, She Wrote (2571859)
4.30 Coach *(r) (83532675)*
4.50 ITV Nightscreen (3089168)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except: **12.20pm-12.30 Central News;** Weather (T) (9909700) **12.55 Lie Detector** (T) (2460716) **1.25 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (4634532) **2.10-2.40 Echo Point** (89607803) **3.15-3.20 Central News;** Weather (T) (5515209) **5.30 Shortland Street** *(464)* **6.00-6.30 Central News at Six;** Weather (T) (377) **11.20-11.30 Central News;** Weather (T) (353613) **11.30-12.35 Wonderful You (7/7)** (r) (T) *(216803)* **1.20am Jenny** *(9345269)* ***1.45*** **Swift Justice** (8297946) **2.35 Shark Pod** (r) *(9555507)* **3.30 Cybernet** *(96656)* **4.00 Central Jobfinder '99** (T) (7723656) **5.20-5.30 Asian Eye** *(9236014)*

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except: **12.15pm Westcountry News** (T) (7781071) **12.27-12.30 Illuminations** (9097919) **12.55-1.25 Westcountry Lunchtime Live;** Weather (T) (2460716) **1.25 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (4634532) **2.10-2.40 Lie Detector** (T) (89607803) **3.15-3.20 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (5515209) **4.59-5.00 Birthday People** (3773824) **5.30 Dig It with Den** (464) **6.00-6.30 Westcountry Live** (T) (377) **11.20-11.30 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (353613) **11.30-12.30 Wonderful You** (7/7) (r) (T) (54483)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News;** *Weather* (7781071) ***5.26*** **Crimestoppers** (6325764) **5.30 Grass Roots** *(T) (464)* ***6.00-6.30 Meridian Tonight*** (T) (377) **7.29-7.30 Meridian Weather** (509483) **11.20 Meridian News;** *Weather (T) (353613)* **11.30-12.30 Fitz** (T) (54483) **5.00am-5.30** ***Freescreen*** (T) (52675)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except: **12.14pm Anglia Air Watch** (9092464) **12.15-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (7781071) **5.24 Anglia Air Watch** (5975223) **5.25 About Anglia** (6044826) **5.58 Anglia Weather** (T) (655716) **6.00-6.30 Anglia News** (T) (377) **11.19 Anglia Air Watch** (864880) **11.20 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (353613) **11.30 Crime Night** (963754) **11.45-12.00 The Ticket** (r) (968209)

S4C

Starts: **5.55am Sesame Street** (r) (28774919) **7.00** ***The Big Breakfast*** *(69634483)* ***9.00*** **Ysgolion:** History in Action (67961648) **9.20 Geographical Eye** *(67878984)* ***9.40*** **Science in Focus** (35433483) **10.00 Middle English** *(54319342)* ***10.20*** **Fourways Farm** *(55395939)* **10.30 Scientific Eye** (39646193) **10.45 Express** *(39641648)* ***11.00*** **The Number Crew** (25029919) **11.15 Lisa Looks Back** *(47253990)* ***11.25*** **Schools at Work** (92544975) **11.30 Powerhouse** (T) (90346377) **12.00 Caroline in the City** (r) (T) (63175445) **12.30pm Sesame Street** (T) (93993613) **1.00 Planed Plant** (T) (69531342) **1.30 Collectors' Lot** (T) (82886087) **1.35 FILM: On Moonlight Bay** (T) (38744613) **3.20 Collectors' Lot** (T) (10542551) **3.50 Fifteen-to-One Gra nd Final** (T) (92404280) **4.30 Ricki Lake** (T) (99002087) **5.00 Planed Plant** (41304700) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (99026667) **6.00 Party Election Broadcast** (T) (70765071) **6.05 Newyddion 6** (T) (70764342) **6.10 Heno** (T) (39331532) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (41497464) **7.30 Darllediad Etholiadol** (T) (56525667) **7.35 Newyddion** (T) (31967483) **8.05 Ti Di Gweld?** (T) (84320938) **8.35 Teulu'r Mans** (r) (T) (52529803) ***9.05 She's Gotta Have It*** *(2/10)* (T) (57021445) **9.35 Friends** (T) (84535551) ***10.05*** **Father Ted** (T) (51840803) **10.40 First on Four** (r) (T) (81832006) **11.10 The 11 O'Clock Show** *(85487209)* ***11.40*** **The Adam and Joe Show** (T) (67077938) **12.10am** ***Dispatches*** *(r) (T)* (15916033) **12.40 Prey** (T) (32384878) **1.35 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.30am The Magic Roundabout (2538667)
5.35 The Pink Panther (2585754)
5.55 Sesame Street (5744087)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (90087)
9.00 Schools: History in Action (9274700) **9.20** Geographical Eye (9367464) **9.40** Science in Focus (7738280) **10.00** Middle English (3638648) **10.20** Fourways Farm (7002938) **10.30** Scientific Eye (9261358) **10.50** Express (8307071) **11.00** The Number Crew (5666532) **11.10** Lisa Looks Back (6195025) **11.25** Schools at Work (9886071) Powerhouse (7280)
12.00 Sesame Street (T) (94754)
12.30pm Bewitched (r) (T) (23700)
1.00 Caroline in the City Caroline's elderly neighbour needs help (T) (93174)
1.30 Dead Reckoning (1947) Tense mystery, starring Humphrey Bogart as a former paratrooper who stumbles across murder and intrigue while searching for a missing Army buddy. With Lizabeth Scott and Morris Carnovsky. Directed by John Cromwell (T) (32057174) [FILM]
3.20 Collectors' Lot (T) (5558716)
3.50 Fifteen-to-One Grand Final (T) (1463700)
4.30 Countdown (T) (7261754)
4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (9016087)
5.30 Pet Rescue Presented by Wendy Turner-Webster and Mark Evans (T) (826)
6.00 Friends (r) (T) (919)
6.30 Hollyoaks (T) (241)
7.00 Channel 4 News; *Weather (T) (153731)*
7.55 New Labour, New Language *Advertising guru Trevor Beattie argues* against the Government's use of focus *groups (4/5) (T) (903445)*
8.00 Designs on Your Loo (3/3) (r) (T) (4087)
9.00 First on Four *Profile of the outspoken* comedian Ruby Wax (r) (T) (3087)
9.30 [CHOICE] **Dispatches** Christopher Hird challenges a family of four from Walsall to cope without their two cars for a week (T) (16464)



Ricky Schroder as Danny Sorenson, Sipowicz's new partner (10pm)

10.00 [CHOICE] **NYPD Blue** Sorenson and Sipowicz pick over clues left behind by a double homicide (T) (7938)
11.00 The 11 O'Clock Show Satirical comedy (8532)
11.30 Ally McBeal (r) (T) (52025)
12.30am 4 Later Introduction, Prey (86781)
1.30 Vids Offbeat video review (21781)
2.00 Late Toon: The Beautiful Ones *Animation* (5388762)
2.05 NYPD Blue (r) (T) (7940946)
3.05 St Elsewhere *Featuring members of the* cast from *Cheers* (r) (3260507)
3.55 The Dove (1974) *A 16-year-old boy* learns about life and love during a *round-the-world trip in a small sailing* boat. Adventure, with Joseph Bottoms and Deborah Raffin. Directed by Charles Jarrott (943061) [FILM]

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport (5509209)
7.00 WideWorld Part five. Russell Grant investigates events which will help future generations to understand contemporary life (r) (T) (2459025)
7.30 Milkshake! (2247483)
7.35 Muppet Babies; 5 News Update (4678396)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (8458629)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (r); 5 News Update (8377700)
9.00 The Roseanne Show (r) (T) (5161938)
9.50 Russell Grant's Postcards (T) (8499071)
9.55 The Bold and the Beautiful Maggie warns off Sheila (T) (8398990)
10.20 Sunset Beach Caitlin begs Cole's forgiveness (T) (4854551)
11.10 Leeza (3526716)
12.00 5 News at Noon (T) (8451716)
12.30pm ***Family Affairs*** *Pam has a secret* admirer (r) (T); 5 News Update (1938795)
1.00 **The Oprah Winfrey Show** (T) *(4429377)*
1.50 McMillan and Wife: No Hearts, No Flowers (TVM 1973) *Commissioner's* wife Sally comes under fire yet again, this *time fending off the unwanted attentions* of a psychopathic suitor. Light-hearted *mystery, with Rock Hudson. Directed by* Gary Nelson; 5 News Update (28498984) [FILM]
3.15 Alvarez Kelly (1966) William Holden plays a cattle driver who finds himself caught between the two sides of the American Civil War. Western, with Richard Widmark. Directed by Edward Dmytryk (60975532) [FILM]
5.20 5 News (T) (59879025)
5.25 Russell Grant's Postcards Traveller's *guide* (T); 5 News Update (59878396)
5.30 100 Per Cent (T) (6749280)
6.00 **5 News;** *Weather Round-up of the day's* stories, including First on Five (T) *(6746193)*
6.30 Family Affairs Maria makes an *embarrassing discovery* (T); 5 News Update (6737445)
7.00 The Pepsi Chart *Texas perform their* new single *In Our Lifetime* (2763629)
7.30 [CHOICE] **Aussie Birds** Documentary about the Australian pelican *(T); 5 News Update (6733629)*
8.00 The Way We Were (1973) Sydney *Pollack's acclaimed romantic drama* chronicling the romance and marriage of an *upper-class novelist (Robert Redford)* and a Jewish political activist (Barbra *Streisand) over three turbulent decades.* Bradford Dillman, Sally Kirkland, Lois *Chiles and Patrick O'Neal also star.* Directed by Sydney Pollack (T); 5 News *Update (65164342)* [FILM]
10.15 Kickboxer (1989) Jean-Claude Van Damme trains to become the ultimate kickboxer, determined to exact revenge *on the champion who paralysed his* brother during a martial arts contest. With Dennis Alexio. Directed by Mark DiSalle and David Worth (6556358) [FILM]
12.05am Red Shoe Diaries A woman plots revenge on her adulterous husband (7182781)
12.40 Ice Hockey NHL Presented by Richard Orford and Todd Macklin (96620502)
4.30 Live and Dangerous (2474174)
5.30 100 Per Cent *(r) (6470859)*

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● **For further listings see Saturday's *Vision***

SKY ONE

7.00am Count Duckula (43193) **7.30** Godzilla (59700) **8.00** Pokemon (24919) **8.30** Hollywood Squares (16890) **9.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (26087) **10.00** The Oprah Winfrey Show (55984) **11.00** Guilty! (48648) **12.00** Jenny Jones (64025) **1.00pm** Mad About You (42464) **1.30** Jeopardy (44261) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (80254) **3.00** Jenny Jones (79483) **4.00** Guilty! (58990) **5.00** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (5629) ***6.00*** *America's Dumbest Criminals (2261)* **6.30** Dream Team (2223) **7.00** The Simpsons (6358) **7.30** The Simpsons (2025) **8.00** America's Dumbest Criminals (5006) **8.30** World's Weirdest TV (1613) **9.00** Friends (54174) **9.30** ER (15803) **10.30** Veronica's Closet (37483) **11.00** Dream Team (66919) **11.30** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (21754) **12.30am** *Law and Order* (19033) **1.30** Long Play (4236217)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. *To view any film telephone 0990 800888*
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 51)
Deconstructing Harry (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60)
Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59)
Titanic (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58)
Hard Rain (1998)

SKY PREMIER

6.00am Courage Mountain (1990) (68261) ***8.00*** **Space Jam (1996)** (28396) **10.00 Kazaam (1996)** (54648) **12.00 Mother Knows Best (1997)** (18919) **2.00pm Courage Mountain (1990)** (88629) **4.00 Space Jam (1996)** (1803) **6.00 Kazaam (1996)** (91193) **8.00** Hollywood Buzz (8716) **8.30 Wilde (1997)** (82172667) **10.25 The Glimmer Man (1996)** (784700) **12.00 Sleeping with the Enemy (1990)** (270168) **1.40am Sweet Nothing (1994)** (1798149) **3.10 When Harry Met Sally (1989)** (28482043)

SKY MOVIEMAX

5.15am Invasion of Astro Monster (1967) *(35016209)* **7.00 Freeze Frame (1992)** (34445) **9.00 Married to a Stranger (1997)** (80290) **11.00 Love is Strange (1997)** (84174) **1.00 Cosmic Shock (1997)** (11006) **3.00 Married to a Stranger (1997)** (29342) **5.00 Love is Strange (1997)** (33667) **7.00 Cosmic Shock (1997)** (58025) **9.00 187 (1997)** (18547) **11.00** ***Elmore Leonard's*** **Goldcoast (1976)** (756532) **12.50am Medusa's Child — Part Two (1997)** (1573410) **2.20 A Family Thing (1996)** (645410) **4.10 Action Heroes** (11021472) ***4.40 Freeze Frame (1992)*** *(75843052)*

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm Artists and Models (1955) (7061377) **6.00 Tarzan's Peril (1951)** *(8902218)* ***8.00 The Life and Times of*** **Judge Roy Bean (1972)** (3962713) **10.00 Pocket Money (1972)** (3439342) **11.40** 100 Years, 100 *Movies: War and Peace* (8581483) **12.35am The Laughing Policeman (1973)** (7964897) **2.30 Quartet (1981)** (1729014) **4.15 The Flying Deuces (1939)** (3613255)

FILMFOUR

6.00pm And Life Goes On (1992) (73239174) **7.45** Sun's Gonna Shine (8779464) **8.00 Thieves Like Us (1974)** *(93281716)* ***10.05*** **Killer's Kiss (1955)** (70860025) **11.20 Tin Men (1987)** (3959713) **1.10am The Brood (1979)** (9010236) **2.45 Bent (1997)** *(7620965)* **4.30** Pensao Globo (42994033) **4.50-6.00 Space Master X-7 (1958)** (2100675)

TNT

9.00pm The Ice Pirates (1984) (39092445) **11.00 The White Cliffs of Dover (1944)** (39309006) **1.30am The Venetian Affair (1967)** (82146120) **3.15 Ice Pirates (1984)** (70955101) **5.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre **7.15** Wrestling **8.15** *You're On Sky Sports!* ***8.00*** *Racing News* **9.30** Aerobics **10.00** Ringside **11.30** Australian Rally **12.00** Aerobics **12.30pm** European Tour Golf Weekly **1.00** Live European Tour Golf **5.00** Wrestling **6.00** *Sports Centre* ***6.30*** *Football League Review* **7.00** Futbol Mundial **7.30** What a Weekend **8.00** Spanish Football **10.00** Sports Centre **10.15** You're On Sky Sports! **11.00** Formula Palmer Audi **11.30** Formula Three **12.00** *Sports Centre* **12.15am** You're On Sky Sports! **1.00** Football League Review **1.30** What a Weekend **2.00** Futbol Mundial **2.30** Spanish Football **4.30** Trans World Sport **5.30** Sports Centre **5.45** Close

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics Oz Style **7.30** Sports Centre **7.45** Racing News **8.15** Unbelievable Sports **8.45** Sports Centre **9.00** Fish TV **10.00** Golf Extra **12.00** World Pool League **1.00pm** Sports Unlimited **2.00** X-Zone **2.30** World Pool League **3.30** Ringside **5.00** What a Weekend **5.30** Football League Review **6.00** X-Zone **6.30** What a Weekend **7.00** The Rugby Club **8.00** Trans World Sport **9.00** Formula Three **9.30** Formula Palmer Audi **10.00** US Golf **12.00** *The Rugby Club* ***1.00am*** *Trans World Sport* **2.00** X-Zone **2.30** US Golf **4.30** Sports Centre **4.45** Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00 *Wrestling* **1.00pm** *Fish TV* **2.00** FA Cup Final Classics **3.30** Australian Rally Championship **4.00** Rugby League World **5.30** Inside the PGA Tour **6.00** Formula Three **6.30** Formula Palmer Audi **7.00** European Tour Golf **10.00** Bobby Charlton's Football Scrapbook **11.30** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Trial **8.00** Motorsport **9.00** Tennis **9.30** Live Tennis **5.00pm** Live Equestrianism **6.30** Racing Line **7.30** Martial Arts **9.00** Sumo **10.00** Football ***11.30*** *Racing Line* **12.30am** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads **7.30** Neighbours **7.55** EastEnders **8.30** The Bill **9.00** The Bill **9.30** *The House of Eliott* **10.30** Rhoda **11.00** Dallas **11.55** Neighbours **12.25pm** EastEnders **1.00** Bugs **2.00** Dallas **2.55** *The Bill* ***3.25*** *The Bill* ***3.55*** *EastEnders* **5.00** Dangerfield **6.00** Dynasty **7.00** Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em **7.40** Last of the Summer Wine **8.20** Dad's Army **9.00** The Young Ones **9.40** The Young Ones **10.20** Stark **11.35** The Bill **12.05am** The Bill **12.35** Between the Lines **1.30** Dad's Army **2.05** Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em **2.45** Shopping with Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Wish Me Luck **7.00** Plus On Plus **7.30** The Odd Couple **8.00** Families **8.30** Mind Your Language **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** Emmerdale **10.00** Upstairs, Downstairs **11.00** Charlie's Angels **12.00** Classic Coronation Street **12.30pm** Emmerdale **1.00** Mind Your Language **1.30** Me and My Girl **2.00** Upstairs, Downstairs **3.00** The Love Boat **4.00** The Professionals **5.00** Charlie's Angels **5.30** Emmerdale **6.30** Classic Coronation Street **7.00** The Professionals **8.00** The Benny Hill Show **9.00** The Sweeney **10.00** Hale and Pace **10.30** The Comedians **11.00** *Men and Motors*

Kevin Spacey and John Cusack star in Clint Eastwood's *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (Sky Box Office 2)

CARLTON SELECT

5.00pm What's Cooking? **5.30** Gridlock **6.00** Animal SOS **6.30** Our House **7.00** Boon **8.00** *Sailortown* **8.30** An Inspector Calls **9.00** St Elsewhere **10.00** A Difficult Woman **11.00** Hill Street Blues **12.00** Tales of the Unexpected **12.30-1.00am** Gridlock

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Gummi Bears **6.25** Classic Toons **6.35** Tale Spin **7.00** Classic Toons **7.10** Aladdin **7.35** 101 Dalmatians **8.00** Goof Troop **8.25** Classic Toons **8.45** Winnie the *Pooh* ***9.00*** *Spot* ***9.07*** *Animal Shelf* ***9.17*** Pocket Dragons **9.30** Bear in the Big Blue House **9.55** The Toothbrush Family **10.00** Bite Size **10.12** Rosie and Jim **10.30** Big Garage **10.45** PB and J Otter **11.00** *Sesame Street* ***12.00*** *Spot* ***12.07pm*** *Animal Shelf* **12.17** Pocket Dragons **12.30** Bear in the Big Blue House **12.55** The Toothbrush Family **1.00** Bite Size **1.12** Rosie and Jim **1.30** Big Garage **1.45** PB and J Otter **2.00** Winnie the Pooh **2.30** Quack Pack **3.00** The Little Mermaid **3.30** Art Attack **4.00** 101 *Dalmatians* ***4.30*** *Hercules* ***5.00*** *Recess* **5.15** Pepper Ann **5.30** Smart Guy **6.00** Teen Angel **6.30** Boy Meets World **7.00 FILM: Splash! (1984)** **8.45** Honey I Shrunk the Kids **9.30** Dinosaurs **10.00** Home *Improvement* **10.30** The Wonder Years **11.00** Dr Quinn **11.50** Classic Toons **12.00** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Power Rangers Turbo **6.30** Power Rangers Turbo **6.55** Spiderman **7.20** Oggy and the Cockroaches **7.30** Dennis and Gnasher **8.00** Hero Turtles: The Next Mutation **8.25** The Incredible Hulk **8.50** Iron Man **9.15** Fantastic Four **9.40** X-Men **10.05** *Casper* ***10.30*** *Oggy and the Cockroaches* **10.55** Eek!Stravaganza **11.05** Bobby's World **11.30** Life with Louie **11.55** Home to Rent **12.05pm** The Secret Files of the Spy Dogs **12.30** Donkey Kong Country **1.00** *Mowgli: The New Adventures of the Jungle Book* **1.25** Ace Ventura **1.55** The Incredible Hulk **2.20** Iron Man **2.45** Fantastic Four **3.10** X-Men **3.30** X-Press **3.35** Spiderman **4.00** Goosebumps **4.25** Hero Turtles: The Next *Mutation* **5.00** Dennis and Gnasher **5.30** Ace Ventura **6.00** Donkey Kong Country **6.30** Eek!Stravaganza **6.55** Oggy and the Cockroaches **7.00** Close

NICKELODEON

6.00am Extreme Ghostbusters **6.30** Bruno the Kid **7.00** CatDog **7.30** Rugrats **8.00** Hey Arnold! **8.30** Doug **9.00** Children's BBC **10.00** Wimzie's House **10.30** Papa Beaver *Stories* ***11.00*** *The Magic School Bus* **11.30** PB Bear/Animal Antics/Family Ness **12.00** Rugrats **12.30pm** Blue's Clues **1.00** Bananas in Pyjamas **1.30** Franklin **2.00** Paddington Bear/Lizzie's Library/Portland *Bill/Mr Men/Ivor the Engine* **2.30** Children's BBC **3.00** Children's BBC **3.30** Doug **4.00** Angry Beavers **4.30** Rugrats **5.00** Sister Sister **5.30** Kenan and Kel **6.00** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **6.30** Alex Mack **7.00** Close

BRAVO

8.00pm Martial Law **9.00** Cops **9.30** The Late Lounge **10.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **10.30** Erotic Confessions **11.00 FILM: Firepower (1993)** **1.00am** Erotic Confessions **1.30** The Late Lounge **2.00** Martial Law **3.00 FILM: Beneath the Valley of the Ultra Vixens (1979)** ***5.00*** Extreme Championship Wrestling **5.30** Cops **6.00** Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm *Clueless* ***7.30*** *Caroline in the City* **8.00** Mad About You **8.30** Spin City **9.00** Drop the Dead Donkey **9.30** Whose Line Is It Anyway? **10.00** Frasier **10.30** Cheers **11.00** Seinfeld **11.30** Spin City **12.00** Late Night with David Letterman **1.00am** Garry Shandling's Show **1.30** Nurses **2.00** Almost Perfect **2.30** Tibs and Fibs **3.00** Mork and *Mindy* ***3.30*** *Abbott and Costello* **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 8pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

7.30am Bloomberg Information Television **8.00** Sightings **9.00** Buck Rogers in the 25thn Century **10.00** The Six Million Dollar *Man* ***11.00*** *Dark Shadows* ***11.30*** *The Ray Bradbury Theatre* **12.00** The Twilight Zone **12.30pm** The Twilight Zone **1.00** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.00** Amazing Stories **2.30** *Mysteries, Magic and Miracles* **3.00** Buck Rogers in the 25th Century **4.00** The Incredible Hulk **5.00** Sightings **6.00** Space Precinct **7.00** The Six Million Dollar Man **8.00** PSI Factor: Chronicles of the Paranormal **9.00** Babylon 5 **10.00 FILM: Evil Dead II (1987)** **11.35** Sci-Focus Special **12.00** Twin Peaks **1.00am FILM: Body Melt (1993)** **2.30** The Twilight Zone **3.00** Dark Shadows **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Simply Painting **6.30** Instant Gardens **7.00** Garden Calendar **7.30** The Restoration Game **8.00** Australia's *Strangest Home Improvements* **8.30** The Close Guide **9.00** The Joy of Painting **9.30** Grassroots **10.00** Instant Gardens **10.30** Antiques Challenge **11.00** Hooked on Fishing with Paul Young **11.25** The Home and Leisure House **11.30** Total Fishing with Matt Hayes **12.00** These Four Walls **12.30pm** Our House Down Under **1.00** The *Furniture Guys* ***1.30*** *Gimmee Shelter* **2.00** New Yankee Workshop **2.30** Home Again with Bob Vila **3.00** This Old House with Steve and Norm **3.30** Two's Country

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **4.30** The Diceman **5.00** Rogues' Gallery **6.00** Outback Adventures **6.30** The Super Predators **7.30** How Did They Build That? **8.00** Medical Detectives **8.30** Medical Detectives **9.00** To Kill and Kill Again **10.00** The Great Egyptians: Ramses **11.00** The FBI Files **12.00** Forensic Detectives **1.00am** How Did They Build That? **1.30** The Diceman **2.00** Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00am Hollywood Safari **1.00pm** Wild at Heart **1.30** Wild Sanctuaries **2.00** Nature's Babies **3.00** The Making of The Leopard Son ***4.00*** *Tiger Hunt* ***5.00*** *Wild Rescues* **6.00** Pet Rescue **7.00** Wildlife SOS **7.30** Wildlife SOS **8.00** Animal Doctor **9.00** Emergency Vets **9.30** Emergency Vets **10.00** Emergency Vets **10.30** Emergency *Vets* **11.00** Emergency Vets **11.30** Emergency Vets **12.00** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm Spunky Monkey **7.30** Giants of Ningaloo **8.30** Bear Attack **9.00** Extreme Earth: Landslide! **9.30** Extreme Earth: Ice Climb **10.00** On the Edge: Filming Through *the Arctic Night* **11.00** On the Edge: Arctic Journey **12.00** Shipwrecks: Lifeboat — By Invitation Only **12.30am** Shipwrecks: Lifeboat — Not a Cross Word Spoken

HISTORY

4.00pm Secrets of War: The Invasion of *Panama* ***5.00*** *Infantry* **6.00** The Real Robinson Crusoe **6.55** Photos for the Future **7.00** Tales of the Gun: M-16

CARLTON FOOD

9.00am *Food Network Daily* **9.30** Coxon's Kitchen College **10.00** Chef for a Day **10.30** So You Think You Can't Cook **11.00** Worrall Thompson Cooks **11.30** Ideal Home Cooks **12.00** Food Network Daily **12.30pm** Food Factory **1.00** Coxon's Kitchen College **1.30** The Green Gourmet **2.00** Retrospectives **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** Simply Fish ***3.45*** *More Simply Antony* ***4.30*** *Mridula's* Indian Kitchen **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Can't Cook, Won't Cook **6.30** *Animal Rescue* ***7.00*** *Professor Bubble* **7.25** Caillou **7.30** Polka Dot Shorts **7.40** Johnson and Friends **7.50** Babaloos **7.55** Practical Parenting **8.00** Barney and Friends **8.25** My Zoo **8.30** Tiny and Crew **8.50** Practical Parenting **9.00** Special Babies **9.30** Home and Away **10.00** The Jerry Springer Show **10.50** Maury Povich **11.40** Brookside **12.10pm** Through the Keyhole **12.40** Rescue 911 **1.10** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **1.40** Maury Povich **2.30** Special Babies **3.00** Living Room **3.50** Michael Cole **4.40** Home and Away **5.10** Through the Keyhole **5.40** *Can't Cook, Won't Cook* **6.15** The Jerry Springer Show **7.05** Rescue 911 **7.35** Animal Rescue **8.00** LA Law **9.00 FILM: Murder on the Rio Grande (1993)** **11.00** Sextasy! **12.00** Close

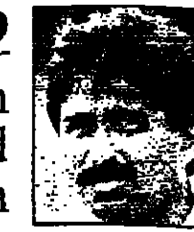
ZEE TV

5.00am Hasya Te Na Ghar Vasya **5.30** Hai Thi Hil Hai **6.00** Hero Kal Aaj Aur Kal **6.30** Awaz Nayee Andaz Wohi **7.00** Farh Sai Babn **7.30** News **8.00** Karoban Dunya **8.30** Tara 2 **9.00** Zanjeeren **9.30** Zee Health Show **10.00** Urdu Drama **11.00** Pot Luck ***11.30*** *Parampara* ***12.00*** ***Gujarati FILM*** **3.00pm** Bangla TV: Nokhatrer Rat **3.30** Public Demand **4.00** Film Chakkar **4.30** Fardeal Antakshari **5.30** Teacher **6.00** Pop Time **6.30** Hip Hip Hurray **7.00** Gudgudee **7.30** Cinemagic **8.00** News **8.30** Chana Aur Natrat **9.00** Hasratein **9.30** Bunty 2 **10.00** Pakistan News Link **10.30** X-Zone **11.30** Emirates World of Cricket **12.00** News **12.30am** Zee Business Show **1.00** Bangla TV **1.30** Parwarish **2.00 Hindi FILM** **4.30** An Hour With

LONDON MARATHON 45-48
The full list of all the finishers and their times continues

SPORT

CRICKET 49
Discontent in Pakistan camp as Miandad steps down as coach



THURSDAY APRIL 22 1999

Fears about Hungary trip recede

Keegan set to compromise over selection

BY GEORGE CAULKIN

KEVIN KEEGAN, whose faith in the power of positive thought is the stuff of legend, will have grasped the news that England are once more a top-ten side in the Fifa world rankings with all the vigorous enthusiasm with which a shipwrecked sailor would cling to a lifebelt. It will not have escaped the notice of the temporary England manager, who names his second international squad today, that choppy waters lie ahead.

It is not unusual for a football coach to be subjected to the stinging barbs of criticism, but, in this instance, Keegan's hide will need to be thicker than most. Whoever he chooses for the match away to Hungary next Wednesday, whichever clubs are required to lose their players, a chorus of disapproval will doubtless be heard. The euphoric response to England's 3-1 victory over Poland last month must already seem a fond, fading memory.

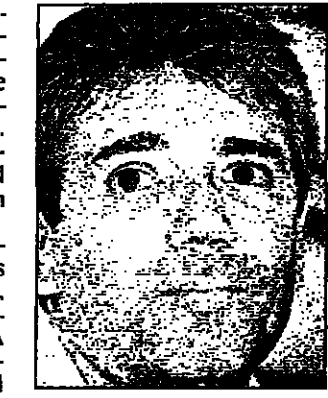
Though it is hardly Keegan's fault — the match was arranged by Glenn Hoddle, his predecessor — this is a fixture that satisfies nobody. A clutch of FA Carling Premiership managers have voiced their concern at such insensitive timing for a meaningless game while, with England due to play in Budapest at a venue only 200 miles from the Serbian border, security has become a salient issue.

The Football Association was at pains to give forthright reassurance on the latter point last night, having yielded to Government advice on the matter of safety. It is now reasonable to assume that unless the situation in Kosovo deteriorates grievously, the match will proceed as planned.

"When we have an obligation to play an international game, we don't welsh on our obligations lightly," David Davies, the FA's executive director, said. "Indeed, when we pulled out of games in the past, we didn't do so without a lot of soul-searching first.

"In this case, we have been in regular contact with the Foreign Office and their advice is that there is no reason not to travel to Hungary. We feel that we have an obligation to the fans, both those who are travelling from England as well as the Hungarian supporters who have bought tickets."

From Keegan, however, a series of explanations will still be required. Though he has expressed his sympathy for the likes of Arsène Wenger,



Keegan: expects criticism

George Graham and Ruud Gullit, all of whom have stated their dissatisfaction at the prospect of losing their most influential players at a crucial stage of the season, he has little option other than to select the best at his disposal, even if there are championship, European and relegation issues still to be decided.

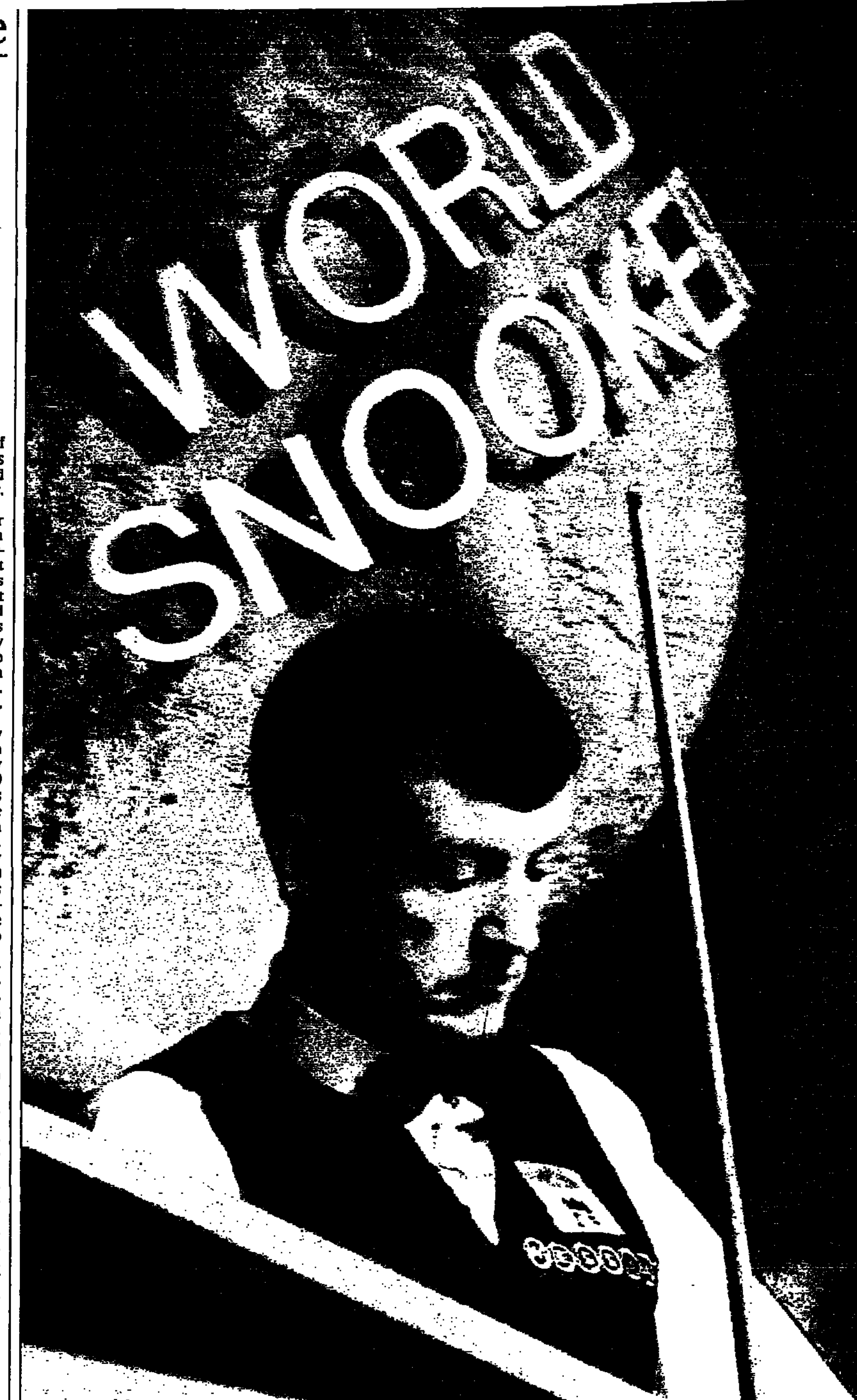
A form of compromise is nonetheless likely. "The squad is a matter for Kevin," Davies said. "I know he's been talking to various managers and I'm sure there will be some give and take." Players nursing injuries or strains will not be selected, leaving a glittering opportunity to promote from within. Regular mainstays of the under-21 team, such as Frank Lampard, Richard Wright and Emile Heskey, can expect advancement.

A source of apprehension or not, the journey to eastern Europe will at least be undertaken in the knowledge that Keegan's appointment has already had a significant effect. England have improved their position in the rankings by one place, to tenth. They are the only home nation to rise. Scotland and Northern Ireland are down two places, to 28th and 69th respectively, and Wales are 82nd.

All in all, it was a busy day at Lancaster Gate. Gordon Strachan, the Coventry City manager, was fined £1,000 plus costs and censured for his part in the touchline mêlée that marred his team's match away to Chelsea in January. Noel Whelan, the Coventry striker, must also pay £750 and costs, although it was decided by a disciplinary commission that Jim Blyth, the goalkeeping coach, had no case to answer.

The Stamford Bridge contingent did not escape unpunished for their part in the confrontation. Mark Nicholls, the midfield player, was fined £750 while Aaron Lincoln, the kit manager, and Terry Byrne, the masseur, must pay £200 and £250 respectively. Whelan was also fined £1,000 and given a one-game suspension after receiving his eleventh yellow card. Olivier Dacourt, the Everton midfield player, was fined £2,500 and warned as to his future conduct after amassing 14 yellow cards.

Mark Bosnich, the Aston Villa goalkeeper, has denied reports that he will join Manchester United at the end of the season. The Australia international, 27, is out of contract this summer, but has dismissed suggestions that he might command a weekly wage of £50,000 at Old Trafford. "I would have to be Pelé, Maradona and Ronaldo rolled into one to deserve that money," he said.



Black mood: Steve Davis, the six-time champion, slumps in disbelief as a magnificent comeback in the first round of the Embassy world championship is thwarted on the last black yesterday. Report: page 50. Photograph: John Giles

CATCH OF THE SEASON

CHRISTOPHER MARTIN-JENKINS

The voice of cricket joins The Times

The best-known name in cricket journalism is joining The Times. Christopher Martin-Jenkins becomes chief cricket correspondent on May 1, in time to lead our coverage of the World Cup. Martin-Jenkins, who was voted the sports reporter of 1996, joins from The Daily Telegraph, where he was the cricket correspondent for eight years.

He was previously cricket correspondent of the BBC and he remains a member of the Test Match Special team. His books include The Complete Who's Who of Test Cricketers and The Wisden Book of County Cricket. An extract from his latest, An Australian Summer, will appear in The Times next month.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1698

ACROSS
4 Shack (3)
8 Have anguish (over) (7)
9 Illicit spirit ...(5)
10 ... Russian spirit (5)
11 Gradually unfreeze (7)
12 Get over (embarrassment) (4,4)
14 Grain store; missile chamber (4)
15 Connection (4)
16 Sloppy: in broken-down shoes (once) (8)
20 Close-together group (7)
21 Give permission for (5)
23 Chief city of Piedmont (5)
24 Swiss city, 1925 Pact (7)
25 A hair preparation (3)

DOWN
1 Wonder (at) (6)
2 Fill (lorry); a burden (4)
3 Wonder-worker (6)
4 Serious punishment awaits (5,4,4)
5 Stealing (5)
6 Single big stone; faceless organisation (8)
7 Minority (slum) area (6)
13 Leading force (8)
15 Find position of (6)
17 A fish; sounds like 15 down (6)
18 Ernest —, *Cynara* poet (6)
19 Nettle, bee attack (5)
22 Ancient stringed instrument (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1697
ACROSS: 1 Sawbill 5 Fleck 8 Undue 9 Academe 10 God 11 Falsehood 12 Encore 14 Pliers 17 Recipient 18 Fob 19 Asphalt 20 Miami 21 Metre 22 Extreme
DOWN: 1 Smuggle 2 Waded 3 Ire 4 Liable 5 Flageolet 6 Eyesore 7 Knead 11 Fireplace 13 Cockpit 15 Subside 16 Teethe 17 Rearm 18 Flare 20 Mat

Relegation battlers will have only themselves to blame

BY STEPHEN WOOD

RARELY will luck or destiny have played such a supporting role in the scramble to escape relegation. The fixture computer has conjured up so many "six-pointers" that whichever teams have fallen out of the FA Carling Premiership by May 16, they will have little else to blame but themselves.

Indeed, the only predictable scenario in the closing acts of the final season of the millennium is that Nottingham Forest will spend the beginning of the 21st century in the Nationwide League first division. For ten days now, they have finished their own matches only to await news from other grounds.

Three times, the news has been good, but it is inconceivable that the stays of execution can continue. The end could come on Saturday, if either Blackburn Rovers or Charlton Athletic are victorious.

Even with Forest gone, however, the competition becomes more intense. Logically, it appears that the remaining two relegation places could be filled by five other teams. Charlton Athletic, who drifted helplessly into the bottom three after the 4-1 defeat by Tottenham Hotspur on Tuesday night, are looking vulnerable.

Yet Alan Curbishley, their manager, is wise to the shifting sands of the Premiership. "Everybody thought Everton were dead and buried a couple of weeks ago," Curbishley said. "But suddenly they win two on the spin and now, supposedly, they're safe. It can change quickly for us, too."

Charlton could wish for no better chance of extricating themselves from the mess than in the next two matches. They meet Everton, who still only have 37 points, at Goodison Park on Saturday, while the next weekend, Blackburn visit The Valley.

What an occasion that promises to be. The two sides are separated today by just one goal and, although Blackburn have a game in hand, it is against Manchester United. Brian Kidd, the Blackburn manager, has tried to appear as aloof as possible recently. "There's no talk of relegation," he said. "We'll just carry on doing our best and hopefully we'll be here next season."

Kidd is not exactly burying his head in the sand, but his managerial inexperience has given rise to rather more scepticism than may have been expected at Ewood Park. Nevertheless, if they beat Charlton and take maximum points from their home encounter against Forest, scepticism could give way to optimism.

In addition, the club was yesterday lifted by news of Stéphane Henchoz, the defender. Rumours suggested that he was out for the season with a groin injury, but the player has indicated that he will soldier on.

The signals being emitted from Everton yesterday were rather mixed. Olivier Dacourt, the midfield player, was told by a Football Association disciplinary hearing that he must pay a fine of £2,500 for amassing 14 bookings this season. However, he was not given another suspension, as was originally feared. Counterbalancing that was the publication of the club's pre-season matches for the summer. Pessimism is rife, it seems, for Everton will face the Nationwide League talents of Rotherham United, Manchester City and Tranmere Rovers in July.

Six points from their latest two games have transformed Everton, but if things take another turn for the worse, their final match of the campaign, against Southampton at The Dell, should be an entertaining experience.

Whatever Everton's fate by then, Southampton, who lie second from bottom today, are likely to have to beat them to stay up. That is unless they can reap maximum rewards from the next three games, against Derby County, Leicester City and Wimbledon. Perhaps then, the last of the five teams in danger, Coventry City, will be back in the mire. That is dependent on their fortunes in the next three games — against Leicester City, Wimbledon and Derby.

EVERTON: April 24: Charlton (h); May 1: Chelsea (a). May 8: West Ham (h); May 16: Southampton (a)
COVENTRY CITY: April 24: Leicester (a). May 1: Wimbledon (h). May 8: Derby (a). May 16: Leeds (h)
BLACKBURN ROVERS: April 24: Liverpool (h). May 1: Charlton (a); May 8: Nottingham Forest (h). May 12: Manchester United (h). May 16: Newcastle (h).
CHARLTON ATHLETIC: April 24: Everton (a); May 1: Blackburn (h); May 8: Aston Villa (a); May 16: Sheffield Wednesday (h).
SOUTHAMPTON: April 24: Derby (a). May 1: Leicester (h). May 8: Wimbledon (a). May 16: Everton (h)
NOTTINGHAM FOREST: April 24: Aston Villa (a); May 1: Sheffield Wednesday (h); May 8: Blackburn (a); May 16: Leicester (h).



Dominguez's goal for Tottenham was in part responsible for sending Charlton back into the relegation zone

